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SKETCHES OF BRITAIN.

BY
JAMES HOWIE, M.D.,
AUTHOR OF "MY HOME, MY COUNTRY, AND MY CHURCH."

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SKETCHES OF BRITAIN.

BOOK I.

BRITAIN, my country ! all thy varied scenes—
Thy northern mountains, and thy southern plains,
In smiling sunshine seen, or gloomy shade,
I sing, advent'rous ; changing oft my theme,
And mingling with it still my tears or joy.
How often, breathless and bedewed with sweat,
Have I, Ben-nevis, scaled thy frowning cliffs,
And from thy summit, looking far abroad,
Beheld in prospect grand, a vast array
Of mountains and of hills, of every form
And every height, lowly or tall, or round,
Fantastic, or sublime, piercing the blue
Of heaven's vast canopy, or sleeping calm
Beneath the shadow of the sunny clouds ;
More stately far, and not less numerous,
Than the assemblage vast of buildings seen
By him who from St Paul's, on summer's morn,
Looks down on London: for, as cities, spires,

A

Domes, pinnacles, and steeples, rise sublime
Above the abodes of men; so do the grand
And rocky mountains of the north, ascend
Above the lesser hills, that round about
Encircle them in thousands! Who can tell
Their number, or their height, as on this bright
And sunny day they stand, in order dread,
Around me and below me! Yet a few,
A very few, of Scotia's hills are there.
Go northward, climb Ben-wyvis, look abroad—
Another group, far as the eye can reach,
Dazzles our vision. Yet again descend,
And, journeying southward, climb Benlomond's top—
Another crowd display their noble forms
In endless prospect. Caledonia!
These are thy martial battlements!—by these
Guarded, thy hardy sons in days of old
Laughed at the shaking of the Roman spear,
And mocked the Dane and Saxon! Grampian heights!
Bare, rugged, grey, who shall attempt to paint
The changes ye exhibit, as the day
Revolves, or weather shifts? At sunrise bright,
The curling mists, in which the sombre night
Had shrouded you, roll off in massy wreaths,
Spangled with gold; seen from the lofty height
On which I take my stand, it seems a sea
Swoln to convulsive size by recent storm,
And tossing still between the peaceful calm;
And ye seem monstrous tenants of the deep,
Whose heads terrific, shoulders broad, and backs

Shaggy and rough, the yawning waves disclose.
But as the sun advances, the strange scene,
So wild and visionary, changes quick;
The wreaths of mist, fantastic, melting, soon
Descend in dewy showers; the spiry cliffs
And tall black rocks are now distinctly seen,
Glitt'ring in sunlight; soon the crimson heath,
Spangled with gems, emerges on the eye;
And long ere noon ye show again your shapes,
Diversified, huge, and magnificent.

At brilliant sunset, too, I've cast an eye
Of rapture o'er you, as your giant forms
Enlarged upon my sight; for in the light,
Gorgeous and dazzling, ye assume a mien
Of higher majesty, until, the sun
Sinking in glory, night again her robe
Of soft grey mist flings o'er you, shrouding all;
And from this height, rebellowing far below,
I've heard the echoing thunder, seen the flash
Of forked lightnings, as they spend their flight
Terrific, o'er the massy pond'rous clouds
That hid you from my vision. And when off
The thunder storm had rattled, I've looked down
And marked a hundred foaming torrents leap
O'er your rough sides impetuous—grander far
Than Foyers, Cora, or the fierce Stonebyres;
Downward they rush in thunder; while beneath
In the low valley, shaking with their din,
The peasants gather, and, with wond'ring eyes,
Gaze upwards. I have frequent too beheld.

From this high peak, the savage storm come down
Upon you in his fury, grasping hard
The rocky soil ; I've prostrate lain and eyed,
Far down, the sweeping hurricane ; rent rocks
In clatt'ring fragments leapt adown, and rolled
In masses to the plains—it seemed as if
Doomsday were come!—but ye outlived the blast
That tore up oak trees by the roots, and laid
Whole forests waste. Now let us down descend,
And seek the margin of some beauteous lake,
That sleeps among these mountains ; let us walk
Where overhanging birch-trees shadow us,
Fragrant and cool. On either side a range
Of lofty mountains rise ; look up, and lo
You see their barren summits capped with clouds,
Silv'ry and white, or stretching tall and vast,
Far up amidst the blue ; while birches sweet,
Alders, and wild briers, clothe the enormous base,
And fringe the lake with verdure : high above
I hear the eagle and the falcon scream,
While linnets, blackbirds, gentle thrushes, sing
Their love-songs all around me. Beautiful
Thy highland lake-scenes, Scotia ! chiefly when
The summer sun emerges from the east
On early morn ; or paints, on dewy eve,
The fleecy clouds with crimson. Ask ye where
The highland warrior gained the dauntless form,
The iron muscle, and th' elastic bound,
That terrified in battle ? look above,
And see how fearlessly yon band of youths

Are climbing heights enormous, scaling rocks
 And precipices, where the wild goats scarce
 Can venture or find footing; from their birth
 Danger was reckoned pastime, toil delight—
 Storms, thunders, lightnings, were their chosen
 friends;—

On battle-plain why should the flash of steel
 Dazzle those eyes, accustomed to the gleam
 Of heaven's own meteors? or th' artillery's roar
 Shake their firm nerve, who, from the topmost cliff
 Of the high mountain, love to hear prolonged
 Among the shaggy rocks, the awful voice
 Of dread Jehovah, when he speaks to men
 In thunder? Men of gentler mould, born, reared,
 Nurtured on Britain's southern plains, are brave,
 And face the foe undaunted;—but they need
 Training, ere yet with head and front erect,
 Fearless, they learn to close in deadly strife;
 Not so the mountaineer: danger he scents,
 And it allures him;—you require to check
 Rather than cheer him on—the dire array
 Of battle never daunts him; o'er his head
 He waves his dread claymore; and, shouting loud
 “A Gordon!” or “a Græme!” he flings himself
 With all his heart and soul into the fight,
 And conquers then or falls! Or do ye ask
 What fans the flame of love and soft desire
 In the young highland bosom? 'tis such scenes
 As those I now survey: these beauteous scenes
 Soften, on summer eve, the dreary soul

Of mountaineer, accustomed all the day
To feats of toil and danger. Oh how sweet
To walk with her he loves, upon the banks
Of such a lake as this, and hear the sound
Of sweetest music stealing on the gale,
From birds of varied plumage! while the sun
Is hast'ning to his rest, and the full moon,
Rolling above, begins to see her face,
So pure and chaste, in the clear sparkling wave.
'Tis this variety of wild and meek,
Gentle and terrible, sublime and sweet,
In Nature's face, that shapes the character
Of all the Grampian dwellers—dauntless, firm,
Yet kind and loving; terrible in war
As lions, and more meek than lambs in peace.

But let us pass along, and view the forms
Diversified, of precipice and peak,
That overhang these waters, mirroring
Their shapes fantastic in the lake's clear breast.
'Tis nearly noon: the day is bright, and all
Is loveliness and peace; the hills around
Are gemmed with sheep, and lambkins browzing
meek
Beneath the shepherd's eye; on every hand
Are fields waving with corn; no sound is heard
Save song of highland maiden, as she spreads
Her clothes upon the green, or peasant's clear
Whistle, as he answers her in notes
Wild yet heart-thrilling. Oh how cool the breeze
That, bearing on its wings the fragrant charge

Of wild flowers and of birches, from the lake
Breathes fresh, and makes even noonday bearable.

Or leave the lake's green bank, and seek th' arcade
Of nature: hills on both sides hem us in,
Forming gigantic walls; the bright blue sky,
Adorned with fleecy clouds, o'er-canopies
The solitary scene; the tangling shrubs,
And wild green bushes spread on all sides wide,
Conceal the dark grey rocks and flowers that bloom
Amid the herbage rank; down drips the dew
From off the foggy steep; o'er the high rock
Leaps the bright stream with silv'ry tresses, whilst
On the tall fir above the thrush sings sweet.
Yet o'er these mighty walls that tow'r above
Valley and lake, the awful winter-storm
Oft rushes. I have seen a storm at sea,
When waves rolled high as mountains; I have felt
The pow'rful hurricane's terrific sweep
In streets of London. But, when in his might
The Tempest-fiend careers through Grampian plains
And Grampian lakes and forests, only then
Seem we to know what ancient poets mean
Who sing of *Eolus*, and those dread halls
Through which all winds at once rave and rebound,
Boreas and Eurus, Notus and the West.
The broad and peaceful lake convulsive heaves
Its waters to the darkened sky, the spray
Mingles with rattling sleet and drifting snow;
Nought can be seen distinctly—the wild drift
Only at intervals allows the eye

Glimpses of scenes that awe us; but the sounds
Are many that astound the list'ning ear,—
The groaning forest, and the thund'ring fall
Of many waters, answer to the scream
Of mountain bird, or howl of hill-fox fierce,
Scared, as the fractured rocks impetuous leap
O'er their wild dwelling, as they hurry on
To the deep vale below, or plunging sheer
From precipice stupendous, dash at once
Into the angry bosom of the lake.

The cottage of the Grampian peasant shakes—
His wife can scarce allay the rising fears
Of her dear babes, not yet inured to scenes
So terrible and grand. Dark night comes down,
But still the Storm-fiend raves; the fragile cot
Still to its centre shakes; voices are heard,
Strange and unearthly, wafted on the blast—
The scream, they say, of startled ghosts, as bursts
At intervals the moon through the thick clouds
That o'er her sweep in masses. But 'tis time
To leave this Grampian city built by God;
For oft has busy fancy made me draw
Comparison between these scenes, and one
Of human art. I've styled the lesser hills
Houses and mansions—called the mountains halls
Of state, temples, or palaces—and when the cliffs
Reared high their bold front to the skies, they formed
My pinnacles and spires, tow'ring above
The giant city: then for pavement rich
I had bright plains or heathy vales, or even

Lakes sparkling like silver ; and I gave strange names

To many a street and square, which these proud halls O'erhang. But now to all that's grand in light And shade of that great city, we must say Farewell. Fair is she in the summer's glow, When all her hills and mountains, with their cliffs And peaks, raise high their heads to the blue heavens ; Grand too, when through the shroud of dark deep mist,

That hides the noble scene from stranger's eye, Is heard the waterfall, or torrent's roar—

When from the reeling cottages ascend The voice of pray'r, to Him who rules the storm, And from his throne, majestic in the heavens, Eyes the lone dwellers.—To the Western Isles Of Caledonia, now we urge our flight.

I never saw the bright *Ægean* sea, Nor lovely isles of Greece ; yet much I doubt If in rich beauty, grandeur, grace, they tow'r Above these rugged Highland Isles. Away ! I cannot think so. While on the bold prow Of my gay vessel, o'er the crystal sea Rapid we cut the wave, and still more proud Than yonder snow-white bird that breasts the stream ; Or let me climb the lofty peak where stands Donolly castle, guarding the pass that leads To the highland mountains, and from its height Tow'ring behold those shining seas, that meet And mingle among the isles. The steam-ship

In the bay of Oban yonder, bears along
Rejoicing parties; there the pleasure boat,
By the light oar impelled, glides gaily; whilst
The ruder boat of humbler fishermen,
Is yonder waiting the finny prize. Bright
And shining mansions encircle the bay,
Around whose beach glad parties promenade,
Giving their brilliant shadows to the sea;
Whilst right behind hills green and rocky rise,
On which gay visitors or walk or sit;
And on that clear and placid sea I mark
The lovely isle, Kerera, on whose plains,
Girt by rocks, the ox feeds, and in the sun
The swain makes hay. Lismore is also there,
Encircled by the lovely waters; green
And smiling are its fields, whilst proudly rise
The Morven hills behind. But when the eye
Stretches away so far, the dazzling scene
Bewilders us; for lo, isles, rocks, and peaks,
In thousands tow'r, and still that brilliant sea
Mingles and heaves around them: oh, 'tis hard
To tear myself away.—Now that the sun
Is sinking, making it a sea of gold,
As his pure level beams stream over it;
A gentler hue, as on the twilight steals,
Invests it; for, though now far up the sky,
The clouds are fiercely red, a mellower hue
They gain, when, mirrored on the western sea,
Each spiry rock and tall bleak crag is bathed
In crimson light, until the evening mild

O'er the grand scene her misty curtain throws.
Next morn we plough the sea—for Staffa bound,
And famed Iona. The scene is gorgeous,
Beyond the power of language—shining in
The beams of morn, the glassy sea heaves calm,
Dimpled by many a circle; on its pure
Breast ride sea-fowls white, and spangled fishes,
In the air leap high. Upon the prow seated,
We enter the Sound of Mull: on our right,
In the blue vault, the hills of Morven tow'r,
Whilst on the left ascend the heights of Mull.
Sailing amidst these islands, on each hand
The land is near us; glimpses picturesque
Of highland cottages, and green fields fringed
With tow'ring rocks, are gained as on we speed—
Or stately domes and dancing rivulets
Among the woods. But now we leave Mull Sound,
And through the bay of Tobermory cut
Our way rejoicingly. Beautiful bay,
And much like Oban; for fair mansions round
Encircle it—the summer residence
Of fashion and of beauty—while hills, rocks,
And trees, tow'r high above. To th' open sea
With arrowy speed we shoot: Ardmurchan
View on the right; Mull also there displays
Her thousand rocky forms, and on that sea
Placid and calm, islands are strewed; crouching
Low, lie Coll and Muck, whilst the lofty peaks
Of Eig and Skye far up in the blue heavens tow'r;
And Fladda, Ulva, soon appear in sight—

Their castellated rocks with herbage fringed;
And yonder is green Tiree, the loveliest
Isle of the West, calling to mind the tale
Of sympathy:—For once, in days of yore,
Sailing upon this placid sea, well pleased
With all around, in humour good with self
And fellow-passenger, a female dressed
Neatly, though her look was pensive, seemed
To court converse; her accents soft betrayed,
Ere yet she told, that her native soil
Was England. She was a peasant's daughter,
And born in Durham. There in early youth
A highland soldier sought and gained her love,
Against her parents' will: she married him
And followed him to barracks and to camps;—
A braver or a kinder-hearted lad
Never wore tartan; he repaid tenfold
Her ardent love for him. When she was sick
He tended her couch; through many a toilsome
march
He cheered and cherished her: she was to him
As an angel of light, diffusing peace
And joy o'er his rough soldier-heart; she brought
Him babes—a lovely girl and two fine boys.
It was his joy and pride, after a day
Of toil and danger, to caress both them
And her; and when the youngest died, his grief
Nearly subdued him; down his manly cheek
The big tears ran, and his stout bosom heaved,
Almost to bursting. He was called away,

After the sad event, across the broad
Atlantic, and a mandate stern forbade
His beauteous wife to follow: her dear babes
Were sent to green Tiree, there to be watched
By her husband's parents; and poor Helen Gray,
In the vast city of London, for herself
Was forced to shift. Yet Malcom Græme—for so
She named her husband—faithful proved, and o'er
The waters broad, kind letters, breathing love
And warm affection, flew. These for two years.
At last, after an interval of dread
Cruel suspense, in which she heard not from him,
A footfall sounded on the steps that led
To the neat garret, where she sat in tears
Plying her needle. 'Twas a winter night,
Her small clear fire was blazing, and her lamp
Burned brightly; the door opened, and her own
Kind Malcom bounded in, and threw himself
Into her arms. Her scream of sudden joy
Lasted not long; for soon the bright lamp threw
Its radiance o'er his altered face and form:
Yes, he was changed indeed! He loosed himself
From her embrace, and, with his upraised hands
Hiding his features, sunk into a chair:
His love for her had made him coward: he
Was a deserter—preferring disgrace
And Helen, to arms and honour in the field.
It was a dreadful meeting; for, like hounds
Of blood, the hirelings of power had scented
His footsteps, and a heavy clang ringing

Upon the stairs, announced the near approach
Of dire armed soldiers. With a bound he gained
The casement and escaped; but not until
He had entreated her to haste away,
And wait him in Tiree. She had obeyed—
Had visited the isle—had seen the babes,
And kissed them; but alas! what could she do?
Her husband's friends were old and poor, and want
Threatened her children. She was on her way
To Glasgow, there to try the world, and have
Her young ones near her. Such was her story.
I left her on her way, and told her tale
To sympathising fellow-travellers.
A few days thence, we found her in the city,
But not in hope or joy, for she was sick;
We did our best to give her consolation,
But ill succeeded, for her case was hopeless.
Oh! who could read her thoughts? her chaste'n'd
face
Was wan and pale; of Malcom much she spoke—
Much of her children—most of all of death
And the other world. Poor victim of care,
Toil and perplexity! When next I saw her
'Twas in the hospital; disease and want
Had brought her there. Oh! she was pale:
The sad tear started to her eye, radiant
In death, on my approach. With feeble grasp
Detaining me—“Oh, it is hard to die
Far from my children, and my husband now
An outlaw; yet I trust my Saviour's grace,

And feel that after I am cold and low,
The orphan's father will from cruel harm
Shelter my children!" What I could I said
In the way of comfort, promising soon
To see her babes, and tell how even in death
She loved them and wept for them. Helen died:
And how the hardy natives of Tiree
Wept, when they heard the news, were long to tell;
For they all knew her story. But the scene,
Beyond the power of words, was terrible,
When the heart-broken husband on the isle
Arrived, and learned her melancholy fate.
Oh, many a day among the woods and caves
Of Canada he skulked, ere he could find
A passage home; and this the tragic end
Of all his wanderings! Nor was this the whole:
He was arrested, dragged to prison, and tried
For foul desertion. Two hundred lashes
Was the poor soldier's sentence; and he died
Under the torture. Oh, what place on earth
Is not the scene of tragedy! what place
Is not the scene of anguish! where is the spot
Where human hearts have not both felt and bled!

But now on Staffa's isle we land, and seek
The cave of mighty Fingal! There it stands,
Spacious and large, as a cathedral
Reared by our pious ancestors, who loved
To worship in the vast and massy halls.
We enter deep and far amidst its huge
Basaltic columns; the billowy swell

Re-echoes through the mighty cavern. Had
Old Homer visited these beauteous shores,
He would have styled this giant edifice
Of Nature, Neptune's temple—called these waves
His tributary worshippers, making
Hoarse music to the great sea-god. Taught now
A loftier creed, we deem these billows sound
In praise of Him whose ways are in the deep,
And who within the hollow of his hand
Sustains the waters. But the classic shores
We visit now of beautiful Iona—
The burial place of kings, learning's retreat
In the barbaric age—the sacred spot
Where the ark of God found resting-place, from all
The storms and billows of dark frowning times.
Yes! here St Oran's church, Columba's dome,
Reared their majestic piles. When heathen gloom
Invested Britain, the sacred truth of God,
Which covers the British isles, spread from the shores
Of far Iona. Oh! still let it spread
From isle to isle, from land to land, until
Christ's radiant glory cover the whole earth.

But now to these far isles we say farewell;
Yet ere we part from them in bright sunshine,
Stern truth requires our altering verse to tell,
That not in splendour always do they rest,
Shining in calm. The furious winter storm
Oft swells to size convulsive these calm waves,
Strewing the lonely beach of many an isle
With melancholy wrecks, drifting the corpse

Of Britain's noblest sons, and casting them
Upon the yellow sands. Oh, I shall ne'er
Forget the dismal night in other years
I spent on Coll. Forced in by rising gale,
We sought a hut, half-hid from view amid
Tall rocks and stunted bushes. 'Twas a house
Built for concealment; for the man who owned
The dwelling was a smuggler, and had long
Defied his country's laws. A glimm'ring light,
Peering from out the tangling briars, and rocks
Spiry, revealed to us the dear abode
Of life; for, drenched with wet, and dead almost
With toil and tossing, we had deemed the cave
Of bear or savage lion a dear spot.

Mooring our shallop in a sheltering creek,
We sought the dreary dwelling; and with toil
And sore fatigue, clambering o'er crag and cliff,
Gained it at last. The door was half a-jar,
Admitting easy entrance; but within
There were no signs of life. A fire of turf
Blazed on the hearth, an untrimmed lamp gleamed pale
On a rude table; but no human form
Saluted us. Forming a circle, I
With my three comrades round the blazing heat,
Were just with out-stretched hands enjoying
The fine luxurious flame, when suddenly
A female entered: 'twas the smuggler's wife,
Who to the lonely beach amid the storm
Had wandered, seeking her husband—task
Hopeless: he that afternoon had ventured

Out to sea; his sloop was shattered and old,—
But, daring and desperate, counsel was vain.
He, with two sons and a boy, braved the storm;
And the poor wife came in with shevell'd hair;
She started when she saw us, but her fear
Had quite subdued her, and she said nothing
But sat in a corner wringing her hands.
Fiercely without the storm raved, and with strength
Terrific shook our crazy tenement.
We whispered comfort, but the poor woman
Would not listen: her eye seen by the lamp,
Was restless still, and still she sought the door.
At last the boom of a signal gun was heard
Above the raging storm: we started up
And reached the beach; behind the clouds, massy
And thick, the moon was rolling, giving dread
Glimpses of a wild sea-scene. 'Twas awful
To hear at once, and see the mountain waves
Rolling and raging: at wild intervals
The moon struck through, shedding dread light upon
The terrible scene. The smuggler's vessel
Afar off was seen, pitching and heaving.
'Twas clear she could not live: crowds now had
thronged
The beach—the females shrieked—the men wore
brows
Cloudy, but could do nothing; for no boat
Could live upon such seas. A cry of woe
Was wafted at last to the land: the sloop
Had struck upon a rock—timber and planks

Were strewed upon the waves—the bold outlaw
And his two sons found a cold watery grave,
Along with the boy. But oh! who can tell
The wife, the mother's agony, who thus
Was reft of all! She waxed delirious,
And ne'er o'ercame the stroke; but wanders still
Along the beach, gathering sea-shells, and oft
Casts frenzied looks across the waves, but ne'er
Speaks of her loss; and we must leave her so.

END OF BOOK I.

BOOK II.

ORCadian isles, what time on summer eve
The cloudless sky glows brightest, are my theme:
Seen from the hill of Hoy, they seem a herd
Of huge sea monsters, couched on the broad wave
That rolls from Norway and the western world.
On north and east, with heads old, stern, and bold,
In calm repose they mock the hostile force
Of every tide that, still defeated, still
Renews the combat—bringing all its waves
Only on foes impregnable, to waste
Their strength, and with hoarse murmur back retire.
North Ronaldshay and Sanday far remote,
On the extremest verge of vision lie,
Forming at dusky eve a sombre scene!
More open to the east, the heaving sea
Appears a waveless plain of leaden blue,
Where Moulin-Head and old St Magnus' tower
Mingle their pleasing forms with bay and Sound:
Surrounding Flota, Cava, and their holmes,
With Hunda, Burra, and *horse* of Copenshay;

While south, o'er Pentland's rapid flowing Frith,
Rise Scotia's blue hills tow'ring to the sky—
Her Maiden Pap, and many a bolder peak.
To north and west the broad expanse of sea
Now brightens in the blaze of setting sun—
Too brilliant for my song, did not a cloud
Receive and intercept his dazzling rays,
Softening their splendour ere they downwards fall.
Now, since the eye has swept across the host
Of clustering isles, unconscious where to rest—
Like him who, gazing on a field of flowers,
Admires the whole yet fixes upon none—
Let us, selecting one, minutely scan
Its varied beauties, riches, grandeur, grace.

And first, come to the western rocks of Hoy,
Tall, bold, erect, that looking downwards, view
The Atlantic billows tumbling playfully,
Through chinks, and crevices, and caves below;
Before the bold and rugged host, as chief
At leader's distance, the old man of Hoy
Stands a majestic form! The towers of fame
Compared with thee, what are they? what in height?
Or what in strength? or what in age?—sure nought!
They, like the hands that reared them, fade with time;
But thou Jehovah's stamp eternal wear'st.
Proud cliffs! the Isles do bless your chief and you!
Long have you stopped the billows' grand career,
That might have swept them to the Danish shore.
Of many a host the glory and the strength
Have failed at last, and nations helpless then,

Their bulwark gone, have yielded to the foe,
Whilst time and war have not impaired *your* strength ;
Yet though your front is warlike, ye look down
On scenes of peace!—The vanquished waves retire
To Stromness Sound ; and, resting there, allow
The fisherman, day after day, to toil
In hope—hanging the patient line to lure,
With tempting bait, the living finny prize.

The eye turns to Pomona, chief of isles—
Not grand in mountains, rills, or trees, or shrubs,
But beautified by bays and headlands bold,
And peaceful clustering cottages that creep
Along the green lawns sloping to the shore.
Her grandest beauties are where sea and land
Mingle in various forms, and shades, and hues ;
Her landscapes rich ; but lovelier far her sea,
Serene and calm, on which mine eye now rests.

Sweet Scapa-Flow ! surrounded by the isles,
A lake thou seemest—gentle, still, and smooth
Thy surface, changing as the breeze sweeps past,
Or sky, or sun, or clouds, hang over thee ;
In the bright sun thou sparklest brilliantly,
And leaden blue becom'st when clouds are dark,
And when the breeze sweeps o'er thee, mighty tracks
Ripple as silver clear ; and smooth as glass—
Emblem of soul serene in saddest gloom !—
The pitchy boat sails over thee, but leaves
No stain upon thy bosom broad and pure,
Thou mighty emblem of the Holy One !
When smooth, thou in the sunlight art a sheet

Of glaring silver, and when gently curled
 A thousand gems dance sparkling in the eye!
 And, mellow, on thy beauteous ample breast
 Fall sunbeams softened from the fleecy cloud,
 Sailing across thy bosom—the hot sun
 Exerts his pow'r in vain, so cool the breeze,
 So sweet, that we are joyful all and blessed.

Holme Sound, I cross *thee* now! nor can my joy
 Find words, when, by the gentle current borne,
 I proudly ride upon the billows' swell,
 Like seamew—beauteous bird; which envying oft
 I envy now no more, for lo I sail
 As gaily on the waves!—I trust the stream,
 And on the eddy smooth glide rapidly,
 Not straight like those who down some river glide,
 But at its will the billow wafts me on—
 Now to and fro, now this way and now that,
 Abruptly tossed, as crossing currents meet,
 And as I sail along, strange fancies rise—
 The Isles seem reeling round, or floating past,
 Or starting to existence from the deep!
 What is their joy, who in luxurious ease
 In richly gilded chariots roll along,
 Or swing in rapid coach, or soft sedan,
 To mine, now charioting the billowy sea?
 What is the majesty of coach, that speeds
 In rapid course along the open path,
 Compared with my small barge, whose prow now
 stems
 The path of ocean, pure, unstained by man?

The dusty and polluted path of earth
I therefore spurn: the deep pure sea for me!

Nor do I only cross thy highway, Sea!
I rest at times, or ply the oar beside
The cliffs and crags that fringe Pomona's land—
Sailing sometimes above the craggy rocks,
Whose rugged shapes are darkly seen below
The surface smooth, just dimpled by the oar,
Or wing of duck scared as we pass along.
How blest, amid the beauties manifold.
Of sky and earth, am I! green fields below
And smooth white clouds above delight my heart,
While breezes, not so balmy, but as soft
As those which scatter fragrance from earth's flowers,
Breathe through my soul their grateful influence:
I bless the sea at parting, as a son
Blesses his mother, or the lover her
Whose smile to him is heaven.

My native earth,
For thou hast also sweets, I turn to thee.
Delightful Helme! how gay from noon to eve
Look thy glad vales when lightened by the sun,
(Whose mighty power on earth I had essayed
To sing, if Thomson with far livelier pen
Had not already traced his various hues.)
Bright orb! thou claim'st my thanks, and those of all
That breathe or move on earth or in the sea—
That ocean and these cliffs, these flowers of earth,
Those fields of standing corn now fully eared;
And yonder clust'ring cottages that lie

Scattered in groups, whose blue smoke upwards curls,
Gleam in thy golden rays a gorgeous scene!
Whilst all around is bustle and delight—
All, all around, through thee, is full of joy.
Down in yon range of meads the hay is made;
Husband and wife and offspring all are there,
Even to the sucking child, and all in health:
The youngster guards the infant, while the rest
With anxious care ted out the fragrant swathe;
Their little flocks of horse and kine at hand,
Browsing meantime the new-cut pasture-ground.
Such scenes as these are rife among the meads,
Through which glides sweet the chief of Orkney's
streams.

How richly varied is this rural scene!
The cots are numerous; and the fields of grain,
Of every size and form, are interspersed
With stripes and patches of rich pasture-ground,
The best of which encircles each small hut.
Such pasture ne'er knows tillage: he who spends
His youth and manhood in far distant lands,
Returning old, beholds the self-same green
On which he reared his childhood cot, and hedged
His field, kindling full glad on grassy hearth
His little fire—still standing fresh as ever.
These plains are meantime rich in od'rous flowers:
A field of clover there all crimson waves,
Another there whose flowers are white as snow,
Both wafting grateful fragrance to the breeze;
The tethered cow and horse there crop their food,

Impatient of the tight restraining cord;
And near them flocks of clam'rous geese are seen,
Now feeding, now most ludicrously bold,
Attacking peaceful stranger passing by.
Behold yon group! a mother in her garb
Homespun, the same the children wear,
Who, as she stoops, surround her, waiting for
The healthful draught which shall be theirs, when
from

The teats of patient cow the milk is strained.
Upon the neighbouring knoll another sits,
The needle plying; while, with household dog,
Good-natured, sport her happy children round.
Ye matrons gay and haughty, round whom squall
The offspring ye have pampered, blush to look
On scenes like these! What serves your nursery care,
Your sweets, your luxuries? sour, naughty, pale,
Your children want the healthful cheek that marks
Yon playful group—the humble occupants
Of dwellings ye despise; though, blessed be God,
Containing all the peaceful inmates need;
For godliness with calm content is gain.

Another tender object yonder, lo!
Invites reflection; 'tis an aged man
Leaning across his door—he whom no care
But fetching peat for fire, water for bread,
E'er draws from home. Yet even his lone abode,
Had not destroyed his sympathy; for though
Long he had lived without or wife or child,
Or cow to crop his green, these once were his;

And vivid memory this night reverts,
Roused by the joy around, to other years—
And while he thanks his God for former bliss,
His withered face lights up with present joy,
And tears stand in his eyes which still look young:
The sun still gladdens him, the fields of corn
And *bere*, tinged by his beams, recall past days.
The aged man is wise, who for the past
Is thankful, who the present can enjoy,
And hope for future bliss: such is the saint.

One melancholy object meets the eye
Amidst the joyous scene: a crazy lad
Is wandering through the fields, now gazing round
With idiot stare—now with strange antic modes
Of gesture, giving proof that reason's light
Beams not within. He was a fisher youth
Who lost his sweetheart. 'Tis a piteous tale:
They loved each other dearly; and one night,
'Twas in the month of July, they launched out
In crazy skiff for Kirkwall, there to buy
Their wedding gear. The night was fine, and soft
The breeze when they embarked, but sudden squall
O'ertook them; the skiff foundered, and the girl
Vanished at once. A floating tartan plaid
Deceived the lover, who swam out to sea
After the drifting relic; there a schooner
From Norway, bound for Stromness, picked him up,
Exhausted and half dead: but since that day
He has not smiled—yet he is harmless,
All the islanders respect and show him pity;

He has no settled home; his parents both
Are dead, and so he lodges where chance casts him.
'Tis said that oft at midnight, in the drear
And dismal church-yard, he is wandering seen;
He has no memory of his loss; his trade
Is calling at the cottages, and, strange
Conceit, collecting damaged earthen-ware,
Cracked cups and fractured tea-pots, which with joy
He carries daily to a small turf-house
He built upon the sand: 'tis full of them;
The building no one injures; not a boy
On Isle of Holme would, for a world, distress
The broken heart of "Crokery Rob;" for so
They name him—keeping with religious care
The spoutless tea-pots till he call again.

But leave the rural scene, and seek the shore
That skirts the eastern side of this sweet isle:
The boats are out in hundreds from the Sounds
And bays, cruising along the leaden blue—
And now some cast their nets; while some, to gain
A more convenient distance, still move on.
The scene is rich and finely picturesque!
Amid the rocks grotesque, the gulls and ducks
Are resting, diving, sailing on the wave;
And now on the broad sea the boats all rest,
Pitchy and black, yet numerous and rich,
Forming the hard-earned wealth of many a cot.
The bravest of Orcadia's sons are there,
Not to defend from warlike foe; but, with
The treasures of the deep, to enrich their homes.

And now, their nets all spread, they patient wait
In hope; and we will leave them, hoping too
That God will crown their labours—sending each
A portion of the myriad finny race.
The glorious sun is down; mild twilight now
Her misty curtain drops and softens all.
Now wends the peasant home, day's labour o'er,
Weary and tired, yet viewing with delight
His ripening crop of yellow corn and bere;
Then, gathering to his cot his peaceful flock,
He enters and enjoys his household-hearth,
While wife and child beside him share his bliss.

Next morn from kindling east the gracious sun,
Less gorgeous, yet more bright than when he set,
Shines on the glittering sea and dewy lawn.
O then, while on the green plains gemmed with pearls,
We seem on purer soil than earth to tread—
While ocean spreads before, serene and calm,
A plain immense shining in silver light,
There gaily glide upon their lovely path
The boats we left last night: the oar now dips,
Now, upwards raised, a darkening shadow casts
On the clear sea—the steady clinking strokes,
Amidst the calm, chime soft upon the ear.

Now let us on this beauteous morn walk round
The peaceful isle, and scan minute the care
And thrift of Orkney mothers, sisters, wives;
Brown in the sun, and thrifty in their garb,
And hardy as the men upon the wave;

These make the hay, or with the ox or horse
Fetch peat and turf, and rear in piles the whole,
Providing thus to meet the winter's cold.
With farming skill they gather manure, too,
For future season; thus, both out and in,
(While on the deep husband and brother toil,) The Orkney females rule and manage all.
Yet think not they to modesty are lost!
When met by strangers at their rustic toil
They oft-times blush—'tis for their home-made garb
And horse, straw-harnessed; yet though liveried
groom
Unkind may sneer, such will not I, best pleased
With simple nature: then make no excuse,
Orcadian females, for your work or garb!
Nor for your humble cot apologize:
Have you not stools and chairs, and cups and pots,
And chest which safe protects your clothes from harm?
Your cheer is also good—your milk, your bread
Of bere and oats, are rich. If any doubt,
Let him, as I did once, admission seek
And gain—tired, hungry, weary and wayworn;
For once when ling'ring on the heights of Hoy
Dark night came down, wrapping the hill in mist:
Fear seized my jaded frame, lest, my way lost,
I should become the prey of want or toil.
My scrip was empty too; I had no food,
Nor couch on which to stretch my wearied limbs.
Without delay adown the steep incline,
Rapid as sailor down the mast, I slid.

I stood on Rackwick's vale; and, wand'ring long,
Stumbled at last upon a lonely hut.
The inmates kind gave welcome glad; and food,
Which tasted sweeter than aught else before,
Was soon presented. Pleasant were my dreams;
For all night long I sojourned there, and slept
On couch which sore fatigue made soft as down.
Next morn I parted, blessing all the house,
And wishing sire and husband safe return
From the deep sea;—for 'twas a fisher's hut.

Now, friends at home, from Loudon's wildest
moors,

Tired, cold, and hungry, should some wanderer seek
A shelter for the night, oh, bid him hail:
With food, and smiles, and rest, repay for me
The kindness I have shared on Isle of Hoy!

Then, generous peasants! not unkindly deem
Your huts, or think your fare too coarse or hard;
Blush neither for your garb, nor cot, nor cheer;
Let out your kindly honest hearts—'tis all
The stranger wants; and wheresoe'er he goes
He'll praise your hospitable board, and hearts
Of warmest kindness, and will style your mode
Of gesture and of speech, the true polite.

And learn a lesson from these thrifty dames,
All ye who think the sex was only made
To figure in the drawing-room, or sound
The witching harpsichord, or dance quadrilles,
Or grace the table, dealing gorgeous sweets:
The Orkney females have a part to act,

When sires and husbands are at sea, from which
They never shrink; yet they are virtuous all—
Most trusty daughters, and most loving wives,
And all work cheerful for the common weal.
Nor are they always decked in homely garb:
I've seen them on the Sabbath, in the church,
Arrayed in silken gown, and bonnet fine
Of richest Leghorn—dressed as gay and neat
As any southern fair; but their best charms
Were healthful cheek and eye intelligent,
Dark-piercing, and of colour azure-blue—
Sometimes with tears suffused when Jesus' love
And grace constraining, were the preacher's theme.

Yes, you will find the Orcadian, female form
Of highest majesty and peerless grace,
When, bounding o'er her father's fields and rocks,
The richest tresses from her sunny brow
Down hanging carelessly in masses wild,
Radiant and heavy, o'er her snowy breast
And shoulders finely dropt; she takes the heart
By storm—causing surprise, as when, from dark
And watery cloud, the sun bursts forth at once.
We cannot choose but love the Orcadian maid
At the first sight; we do not coldly stand
To scan minute each feature—measuring
The forehead's height, or calmly asking what,
Grecian or Roman, is the style of nose?
No—eye, and cheek, and chin, exhibiting
The varied hues of lily, violet, rose,
Beaming with love and innocence, are all

Before us, and we feel the power supreme
 Of nature—yielding, vanquished, taken, lost.
 Bright form! thou seem'st as artless and as kind
 As if thou knewest not, or no one e'er
 Had told thee, of thy charms;—or is it, dear
 And lovely maid, because thou knowest them
 The gift of God, which he has lent thee in
 Thy sea-girt isle, to show the female form
 In its supreme perfection, that thou blushest?

But though the Orcadians now are decent, just,
 Temperate, religious, and most hospitable,
 It was not always so. Short since they were
 Licentious, crafty, fierce, and almost savage:
 The bucanier, with pistol stuck in belt,
 Then stalked across the islands; smugglers then
 Drove fearlessly their traffic; wreckers fierce
 Haunted the shaggy shores. Stories are rife
 Of dark barbarities, and murders even,
 Practised on sailors, who to the wild beach,
 With difficulty, on the oar, or cask,
 Or floating plank, had drifted. Nor alone
 Did savages then practise plunder. 'Twas
 A legal trade in which both old and young,
 Rich, poor, male, female, elder, minister,
 And beadle mercenary, took a share—
 All hurrying to the beach when tidings spread
 Of wrecks. These were dark times. Discord and
 strife
 Disturbed each dwelling; then at close of day,
 Instead of psalms, the passing stranger heard,

Ringing within, the husband's drunken oath
Returned with interest from the female lip.
The tattered children, squalid, rude, and fierce,
Then had no teaching save how best to prowl
In quest of plunder. Profligacy, theft,
And all the vices were as common then,
As now, religion, temperance, honesty.

A blessed change has been effected since—
Change radical and grand. For forty years
These islands have had faithful ministers,
Who preach the cross of Christ, and clearly show
The path of life—bold, lofty, fearless men,
Who do not mince their words, but speak of sin,
And holiness, and hell, and heaven, as they
Who at God's judgment-seat must stand, not man's.
And now, these isles ring to the joyful sound
Of Christ's salvation; and although much sin,
Misery, and vice, may yet be found amidst
Her rustic people, they are in the main
A moral race of men; their children now
Are well-schooled, clean, and neat; and over all
The isles contentment for the most part reigns.

But Shapinshay, when sultry day had closed
On summer eve, an island of the bless'd
Thou seem'dst, when on thy pasture-plains I walked,
Or by thy sea—for all was happy there.
No human form was seen; a simple cot,
Which spirits blessed might lodge in, stood in sight.
I did not enter it, but in my dream

I thought nor sin nor pain could harbour there;
 The lambs in pairs stood, feeding rich, and meek,
 Or lay reclined with head on others' neck,
 Or, straining hard the teat, within the eye
 Of mother standing fond; the seamew walked,
 Rested, and pecked between,—contented bird!
 So pure and white, so harmless and majestic!
 Not far away the fields were darkly rich
 With plovers, ranged at equal distances
 In thousands, quiet, sedate, save when a note
 Plaintive and deep was heard at intervals;—
 Scarce pecking, now they stood, and now they ran,
 Keeping their distance nicely; instant next
 They mount, a sable cloud, and turn the wing
 Harmonic, giving then the palest light.
 Their colour and their voice though pensive sad,
 Is Nature's rich variety, not gloom:
 Acting in concert ever, they are happy.

In loch of water fresh, apart from sea,
 By pebbled sandy banks, the geese and ducks,
 In flocks num'rous and white, were resting quiet
 In speckled majesty, or sporting gay—
 Now darting down, now raising up the head,
 They threw the cooling shower-bath o'er the back;
 Or diving deep, were lost to eye above;
 Sometimes they slowly move; some oaring straight,
 And some oblique, some wheeling gently round
 The water pure, themselves so bright and glad.

Blest isle! if not the heavenly, thou art more
 Than earthly Salem; for, besides defence

Of hills on sister isles, that thee surround,
Within them for a ditch are broadest vales,
O'er which the sea that laves thy shores still floats,
Dimpled and gemmed by thousand happy birds.
Just lately, on the other side it seemed
A sea of glass, sparkling in sunlight clear:
But now the liquid plain appears a sea
Of gold; for, near the north, from silent clouds
The sun with yellow splendour gilds its breast,
And on that gorgeous plain some boats were seen
Gliding on the smooth surface;—not of earth
The beings sure that guide them: could I swim—
I'd plunge at once, and join the happy crew!
Jerusalem above! of golden streets,—
If more than this thy glory, sure the eye
Of man ne'er saw, nor ever heard his ear,
Nor ever hath his fancy pictured right
What thou hast for thy citizens in store!

I well remember yet that glorious night,
When sailing on the ocean green that rolled
Its heaving billows in slow majesty
To their deep caves, how my glad bosom thrilled
When Orkney's hundred isles first on my sight
Burst blazing in the sunset. On the beach
Of Rousay lone, I landed first. With halls
Of Glasgow gay and her old college-rooms,
My poor, small, lonely lodging-house could ill
Afford to be compared; no clasic book,
Or journal fraught with news, or student gay

Was near with sober tale or merry laugh
To cheat the hours; nor, sea-begirt, could I
Across the moor to home and happy friends
Betake me when I chose, noon, morn, or night;
The isle, too, seemed most barren to an eye
That late had swept the rich lawns of the Clyde.
But days flew past, and comfort came with time;
The inmates made my humble lodgings gay
With smiles and kind attention;—all grew well.
The sun began to give his kindly smiles,
And, warm the soft showers fell amidst his rays;
The lawns turned verdant and gay, birds began
To trip o'er stone and rock and also sing,
And beasts from stall and sty in joyous mood
Cropped the sweet herbage. Gladness swelled my
heart.

Forgetful of my home, I scaled the rocks
That, frequent from the green and steep ascent
Of Rousay hills, shoot out abrupt and gay;
And here, on Nature's platform lofty raised
Above the soft-spread carpet-lawn, I stood
Beholding rocks, and cots, and dykes, and sea,
Before, behind, and to them spake each day
In words that feebly showed the enraptured soul,
The scene brought back my boyhood's happy days,
My native glens and braes—for all that's there
Was here, save trees and winding stream in vale.

Amid these cliffs I learned to woo the sea,
And, with delighted soul, enjoy her charms,
Still changing light and shadow as the sun

Gilded its waves; or playful breeze swept past,
Disparting them in curves of blue or green;
Or sunny clouds impressed their mellow hue;
Or Rousay's deep-green hills a darker shade
To mainland cast on the deep sound between.
There, too, the sea flows river-like, but not
As Tay or Thames; like them 'tis dark and deep;
But broad as Ganges or the Amazon.

True, I had left the crimson carpet hall,
With rug soft-cushioned, and high walls adorned
With pictures; here to make amends I found
A more gigantic drawing-room, built by
The hand of Nature—massy, vast, and large,
But neither square nor round. The floor was rich,
The carpet seamless and well-fit, soft too,
And for the tread elastic; green the base
In colour, but thick set with little studs,
Small, glancing, deep, like pupil of the eye,
In hue yellow and white, and red and blue—
Gems hard to find nor to be bought for gold.
The soft luxurious floor supplied the want
Of sofa, easy chair, or Grecian couch;
Rocks massy, old, and grey, composed the walls—
On this side and on that furnishing chairs,
Loo-tables, music-stools, and shelves for lutes.
Ferns on round stalks, through which red berries
 peeped,
Formed pictures; while the brilliant sky above,
Decked with white clouds, furnished a ceiling grand;
The beams of sultry sun supplying fire.

And here I sit or lie at noon of day,
And in the crevice of the wall, beside
The picture green, I have companion sweet;
Not wife indeed, or child, but gentle bird
Whose anxious mate sits on the crag above.
At first when I drew near with timid look,
He leaped around, from side to side, and cried;
But now he trusts his friend. Thrice noble bird!
Who guards and feeds his fond mate, while she sits
Hatching her speckled eggs, in patience meek,
Till little ones appear which both shall love!
O would rude man be taught by sight like this!
His charge as tender—richer far in hope—
Soon may you have, sweet birds, to recompense
Your toils, a gaping youth for every egg!
And joy and safety in your feeding them.

Not so the melancholy birds that dwell
Along the beach, where stands nor house nor cot.
I ne'er was told their name; sea-birds they are
As large as plovers, though of gentler form,
With beaks more round and long, and slender legs—
A dreary note, and one alone, they yield.
The weeping birds they may be fitly called;
For as I walked along, a lonely pair
Leaped round, and wept to me their notes of woe.
What may your weeping mean, birds melancholy?
Has some rude hand bereaved you of your young?
Go rear another nest, 'tis summer yet;
Or wait with patient hope for the next spring!
Come, moderate your grief, it does no good,

And only serves to cast a gloom around
You have no right to cause—then be not selfish;
But, mingling with the birds, go lend your aid
To some fond pair, who scarce can manage right
A family too large for parents' care.

Go visit sickly nestlings; or if sons
You want, perhaps you'll find some orphan brood.
Then leave your lonely life and notes of woe,
And mingle with the birds, and bless yourselves
And them. Believe me, birds! true happiness
Is only found in doing others good.

You're not unlike a human pair I knew
Who lost, most precious gem, their only child.
Hard stroke it was—they only knew the woe;
But must they shun mankind and always weep?
No: 'twas a sovereign hand that struck the blow,
And all for good. To love and be beloved
By beauteous child is, no doubt, earthly joy
Of richest sort; but doing good to man
Yields not to this: no higher joy on earth
Than take the wanderer home, the orphan boy
Or girl—to mingle sweet ingredients for the sick—
To spread the table for the poor—or light
The moral wanderer to the path of heaven!

But sure in Orkney land the bravest scene,
Beyond compare, is when the herring tribe
In numerous shoals visit the bays, and call
The bold Orcadians forth to plough the wave.
The enterprise is bold and grand. A fleet

Of many hundred sail is soon equipped,
Not by rich merchants or the chartered few,
But by each humble tenant of the isles—
The father and his numerous progeny
Of sons—the farmer and his man—the cottager—
Wives, mothers, sisters, sons—all, all now have
Their hope upon the sea: fleet how unlike
The China or the Indian merchantmen,
Equipped by thousands with the boasted gold
Of merchants who are princes; little boats
Built by the hard-earned wealth of many a day,
The little all of husband, wife, and son,
With nets, the preparation of a year,
Well-stored, launch out upon the dark deep main.

The night is beautiful—an hour will bring
The Orcadian twilight: thousands are abroad.
Lining the beach, on the broad bay in front,
A gallant navy rides—two hundred boats,
Manned each by five Orcadians, stand prepared
For sea. It was a busy day. The nets
Were lifted from the plains where they had bleached
All summer—tackling rude and fishing gear
Were carried to the boats: now all's embarked,
And the glad fishermen prepare to hoist.
On board 'tis bustle all,—the voice is heard
Of rough command—some hawl the yards, while
some,
Shouting, raise anchor—flaps the canvass strong
Which soon the glad breeze fills—and gaily out
To sea, with pitching bowsprit start the boats.

The excited gazers from the beach send out
At once a deafening cheer, which from the fleet
Flung back with interest, echoes loud and wild
Along the hills and rugged cliffs; whence scared
From peaceful nest a thousand sea-birds mount,
Darkening the air and rending it with screams:
On cheerily move the boats, like managed steeds
Of cavalry curveting quick or slow,
Pitching and heaving, in the varying breeze.

And now the breeze blows right ahead, they tack
In Water Sound and hold a skilful course,
Not governed by the oar, like racing boats
On river of the south with surface smooth,
But under sail; and he is victor who
Closest to windward lies and fastest speeds.
Their course is zig-zag: with quick motion one
Appears to graze his neighbour's prow, but each
Keeps his own path and soon the way is cleared.
The sturdy boats, although they seem to move
At random, feel the helm and order keep,
Ploughing quite regular the briny wave—
Like gladsome herd on a free path not hemmed
With hedge, or by fierce driver hurried on,
They move as power permits; the stately few
Shoot far ahead, the great majority
Are in the centre, while the lagging weak
Slow move behind—fine emblem of mankind.
But now the shades of night fall o'er them fast,
The crowd have left the beach, and all is still.
Slow moving with the tide, now overboard

Each net is cast, which with the pendant stone
Soon sinks, the painted floating buoy
Marking alone the path of its descent.

And now the bold Orcadian fishermen,
With home-spun woollen sea-coats to the neck
Tight buttoned, and with massy sea-gloves on,
Heedless of chilling mists and searching cold,
Though shivering whiles and looking chill and blue,
Keep through the live-long night their patient
watch:

'Tis dreary sure to dwell on the cold wave
All night, but hope supports: oh noble hope!
By which the hearts of men are kept alive.
The husband bears the watch with patient joy—
Anticipating success—counting up
His gains earned at the sea, to clear his rent
And make his house at home happy and neat.
The fisher young sings of his sweetheart, pleased
To think that in her dreams she may even there
Behold him toiling on the wave, and all
For love of her. Hard drinking some
Anticipate, alas! and desperate
“Potations, pottle deep,” at season's close.
A pious few, devotional, recall
Last Sabbath's sermon, wond'ring meantime where
The text shall be when the bless'd day comes round.
Many half-sleeping nod—others, awake,
With merry jest or tragic tale kill time.
But oftentimes consultations deep are held,
Dispelling sleep and ending jest or song:

The nets require attention; change of place
Is often counselled when no fish have struck:
But where to change? or farther out to sea,
Or nearer to the shore, or, best of all,
To leave off for the night, oft puzzles them.
'Tis thus the men of Orkney spend the hours
On the dark deep when other men do sleep.

'Tis dawn of day, all hands are piped to work,
For now begins the hawling—'tis a time
Of quivering pulses and of throbbing hearts;
For 'tis the hour which brightens with success,
Or damps the heart with disappointed hope.
Success is general. Up the captured tribe
In thousands come, like little silver spears,
Thick set and quivering clear in the grey morn.
Some boats have great success; the myriad strength
Of the small shining captives has itself
Upraised the nets, which on the broad sea spread,
Resemble sheets immense of silver clear.
The poor fish struggle hard for liberty—
Flapping and floundering on the top of wave;
But fate invincible and strength of man
Prevail, till hawled within they gasping die.
Some hands that morn had little toil, but ah!
The load was on their hearts—their nets were clean:
How sad all night to plough the wave and reap
No fruit! but they must bear their fate.

The day is broad awake, the nets all drawn,
They shoreward turn the prow—crowds on the beach
Hear their glad voices, and the clinking stroke

Of boat-oars keeping time. A cheer is given,
And with impatient rush they onwards haste
To hail the stranding boats; while merchantmen,
Rivals in trade, press first and bargains drive.
A numerous band of rosy *lasses* here
Load baskets and convey them to the shed,
Where numerous casks, pile above pile, are seen
Towering in thousands; and the incessant beat
Of coopers' hammers, as they make all tight,
Pierces the ear and makes the eyelids wink.
Among the boats that morn you might have seen
Full many a happy face: the sturdy youth,
Slimy and scaled all o'er, was standing glad
Up to the waist in water; from his hands
A blooming *lass* received the glittering load
Of many a basket: she too was smiles—
They were a plighted couple, whom success
That morn had cheered—and they were married
soon.

But let us now retire to sigh with those
Whose nets that morn were clean. Crest-fallen quite
They spread the ensnaring tackle on the lawn
To bleach till evening; scarcely do they speak,
But look quite dull and somewhat sullen too.
But this mood lasts not: man's not made to weep;
The child of hope, his buoyancy of heart
Constant regains; and so these fishermen
Already at high noon look forth well pleased
To coming night, when they shall try again
Their fishing skill at sea, and mayhap speed.

Again upon the waves I seek the isle
Of Stronsay—moving first through Kirkwall bay,
Glassy, serene, and smooth—then gliding fleet,
Fearless and free, through circles of the sound,
With well-filled sail, whirring through the strong
tide

Against our gunwale dashing, on we bound
Over the gallant billows; till at last
Borne onwards, rapid and enraptured, out
From the strait frith we shoot and gain the sea.
Here a dead calm o'ertakes us; we must spread
The oar: the hardy boatmen cheerily pull,
And through the waveless plain of leaden blue
We move impetuous. 'Tis a mellow day,
Nor dark nor bright; the sun at times strikes
through

The thin o'ershadowing clouds, and light and warm
We rise upon the oar. Oh, who can tell
The bliss of such bright moments—when the eye,
Roaming across the placid sea, beholds
The birds in clusters sleeping, and the isles
Reposing in calm strength? such bliss was ours,
Until on Stronsay's beach we landed glad.

Next morn I sought the cliffs of Boroughhead,
Which, fearless and majestic, look far out
Upon the German billows. Though the day
Was beautiful and calm, far, far below
I saw the fierce waves dashing—for the rocks,
Stubborn and proud, repelled their frantic strength,
And clouds of sun-tinged glory towering rose

Far up among the cliffs. I was disturbed
With looking down on the magnificence
That boiled and raged for ever! Furious waves!
Nor tongue, nor pen, nor pencil need attempt
To shadow out your glory or your strength.

I was not in the vein for such a scene
That lovely morn. I turned away, and lo!
I meet the bright seamew, and sing of her.
Bright bird! the natives often smile at me
For so admiring you! They hold you cheap,
So do not I: ye are my favourites,
Lending a charm additional to sea,
And earth, and sky, with all of which ye mix.
Sometimes, far out at sea, one of your tribe
In solitary beauty rides alone;
Ofttimes in radiant flocks ye settle down,
Gemming extensive tracks of ocean green;
And when on earth ye sometimes deign to light,
It seems a kindness; for ye seek the brown
And desert heath, as if ye pity felt
And wish to clothe its barren nakedness
In robes of dazzling beauty. When ye spread
Your snow-white pinions to the glad sea-breeze,
Then showers of beams, rained from the hot sun,
tinge
Your breasts with glory: when in dreadful calms
Beneath the thunder-cloud in solemn bands
Ye slowly sail, the deep-dark firmament
Pales your pure brightness: but when fearlessly
Clanging defiance up against the gale

And storm-clouds fierce ye mount, the rattling sleet
Rebounds defeated from your scornful wings!
On yon high cliffs across the narrow strait,
There are ye casting down a keen dark eye
To the deep sea beneath! and ye do scorn
Earth's lowly dwellers as ye proudly stand
Upon your castle strong, and towered aloft.
There ye are safe; these pinnacles and towers
Man, grasping tyrant, cannot, dare not scale,
To reach your happy dome and work ye wo;
There, too, your nestlings safely sleep. Oh, would
That every infant of the human race
Had like defence! would that the African
Or Indian mother could her sable babes
Regard with eye as confident and calm,
As thou thy young grey birds; for ye, across
The narrow deep ravine, that separates
Your strong tower from the cliffs on which I stand
To view you with delight, can calmly look.

Yet, proud birds, ye are sitting by your young
Among these beetling cliffs and shaggy rocks,
Not with the distant selfish look of those
Who, if their own are safe, have no regard
For others' rights—not like some British dame,
Titled and proud, whose eye can only rest
On her own daughters, scorning all beside;
For, though ye are the grandees of the birds,
The other waterfowl, or white or black,
Nestling in lower cliffs, are at their ease,
And trust you, while with ever-watchful eye

And pleading voice you gain and guard their rights—
 For ye are often on the wing, and in
 Your patriot hearts they have their confidence.

Ye are a generous flock: all o'er these isles
 Ye may be seen each day, not aye in bands
 Ranged on the barren heath; but, one of you
 Wide straggling from the rest in grassy plains,
 Among the lambs and sheep or lowing kine,
 Quite social, feeding with the feathered tribe
 Of hens and geese. In poultry commons, too,
 Ye often mix, with your white native dress
 Eclipsing quite their tame domestic robes;
 But farewell happiest bird of Orkney land,
 And let me view these wild flowers scattered round.

Ye little flowers, white, crimson, yellow, blue,
 Scattered so thick amongst the corn, and o'er
 The barren fields—like stars or gems ye beam.
 Ye generous flowers! in every land ye wear
 A smiling look, but most in desert plain.
 I never learned to prize you, never knew
 Your worth, till, in these isles, I met your old
 Familiar faces smiling on me still:
 For this I love you. Oh, the world oft turns
 A barren desert! oftentimes it frowns,
 And then its flowers frown too; for beauty's eye
 Oft chills us most when most its warmth we need.
 Kind flowers! ye're never faithless, for ye smile
 Sweetest when we're alone and need your love;
 And as ye look on me, I think ye be
 Fine emblems of yet fairer flowers; for, down

In yon neat manse, upon the green sward, dwell
A happy family. I ne'er saw flowers
More lovely than the four young daughters there ;
They gladden all of us, but chiefly bless
A mother. Yes, they are indeed her flowers—
Beautiful always ; but most so when round
The board, with smiling face and beaming eye,
Each tells the tale or makes the shrewd remark.

Bethia, youngest, sweet endearing babe !
Thine eye—the little flower “forget-me-not”—
Darts beams of beauty from a face, where all
The hues of snowdrop, lily, rose, are blent.
Sweet as the flower, and gentle as the lamb,
And purer than thy robes of lily white,
Thou’rt smiling to thy mother, on the lap
Reclined, and yielding her supremest joy ;
Thy father, and thy sisters young, and I,
Are round naming thee, Thisa, to gain thy smile—
And thou art blessing all of us, kind babe !
And thy fond mother, too, gives us her thanks
In noblest looks of kindness and of grace.
Sweet babe ! thou seem’st to wonder, and to stare
At our fond looks, unconscious of the charms
That fasten all our eyes on thee at once.
And must I leave this scene of household joy ?
Then, lovely Thisa, smile upon thy mother ;
For, sleeping or awake, her eye is on thee,
Seeming to say, Though dark clouds veil the sun,
I care not if *thine* eyes are beaming, dear.
Then let the rude winds blow, and let the hearts,

Once kind, grow cold—none but the Sov'reign hand
That gave thee all thy charms, can ever take
The loveliest babe from a glad mother's heart.

But farewell, Thia! thee perhaps I ne'er
Shall meet again; yet on a desert world
The wild flowers, and "forget-me-not" as chief,
Will beam in beauty on my dreary path,
And ever cheer me. But alas! I oft
Have said farewell to many a smiling day
And many a beauteous scene; and must I use
The mournful word to these delightful isles—
Shining this moment in the sunny glow
Of yellow autumn, fringing each blue lake?
And must I use it, too, to this dear house
And loved abode?—Yes—and one day, to home,
To friends, to mother, and to earth itself!
But now the wind blows fair, the boat is manned
That bears me from the scene I love so much;
And for the smiling daughters of the manse
My wishes are as large and true as his,
The bard of Ayrshire, for the "Sister band"
That lived of yore, in manse whose rich green lawns
Low skirt my "Loudon's bonny woods and braes!"

END OF BOOK II.

BOOK III.

Oh, once again I stand on Kelso bridge;
And, in the glories of the summer's sky,
Behold the Tweed pursue its winding course,
Through scenes of grandeur, loveliness, and peace.
Here, on the one hand, rise the mansions neat
Of lovely Kelso; 'mid the poplars tall
Its gothic ruin swells: on the other side,
The noble domes of wealth and rank rear proud
Their turrets to the skies. High on the bank,
Through yonder range of stately spreading trees
Full fronting me, stands out the palace grand,
Embosomed by a wood; broad lawns between,
Divided by the river, richly spread,
On which the cow is grazing, and the sheep
And lambkins feed, or sport, or rest in love.
Beyond these verdant plains and these green woods,
A range of lowly hills ascend, and show
Their distant shadowy forms. See, below,
A fleet of snow-white swans are steering up
The pure broad bosom of the gentle Tweed;

While, on the flowery bank, the maiden spreads
Her clothes, and hears well pleased the lark's shrill
song,
Or blackbird whistling from the neighbouring
boughs,
Through which are seen fields waving with rich
grain,
Cheering the farmer's heart. Descending now,
We seek the river's brink, and follow all
Its beauteous windings, as, delightful guide!
It leads us on from fair to fairer scenes.
How finely yonder row of shady trees
Lies sleeping on its bosom; while across,
On the other bank, it forms a mirror pure,
In which the innocent sheep that crop the flower
May see, reflected bright, their image pure—
Or gaze, delighted, on the scene below,
Where sky, and sun, and clouds, inverted shine.
The day is calm—there's joy in every step—
The groves resound with music—rural sounds
Ring through the balmy air—high leaps the trout,
Eager to catch the gilded insect tribe,
That play secure above the calm clear stream.
Yet 'tis not that the day is calm and bright,
Nor is it that the classic Tweed glides by
In her calm beauty, that I feel my heart
Swell so, as up her banks I wander on,
Marking the wild flowers, and the trees, and all
The fine rich sights that spread on every hand.
For, mark yon lovely mansion, rearing high

Its white walls 'midst the trees that spread around,
And o'er it cast their shadows—on each side
Are strewed rich fields, where herds and flocks re-
joice:

There stands the dear abode at once of life,
And happiness, and virtue; thitherward
I bend my steps, leaving, well pleased, the Tweed,
And all her beauteous birds and fragrant flowers,
To join the kind domestic circle, where
The graces and the virtues shine and bloom.—
The patriarch father meets me at the door,
And gives the accustomed welcome. Though 'tis
now

The even-tide of life, yet all within
Is calm, serene, and peaceful—for his sons
Sustain all cares; and what has he to do,
Save, like the good old patriarch, at even
To walk abroad, and meditate on God,
And life, and death. The morning of his day
He well hath spent, and now enjoys its close.
His fields, indeed, are fair and promising,
Well cultured by a numerous peasant band;
Clean are the crops and rank, inspiring hope
Yet these are not his only portion: far
Above earth's richest fields, his treasures wave
In the upper paradise,—these brighter scenes,
Made visible by faith, gladden his soul.
Grateful for earthly good, still, still he seeks
The better land;—contented here, yet up
To heaven he looks. Nor does he look alone:

His loving partner fans his every hope;—
Long have they lived and loved, in hope and fear,
In light and shade, and soon they hope with God
To dwell on high, and live and love for ever.
'Tis thus they nobly walk and nobly hope.
Nor they alone: their children have been taught
The ways of God; their parents lead the way,
And they do love, and follow them to heaven.
Oh, happy family! nor strife, nor rage,
Discord nor feud, ye know; 'tis surely heaven
To sojourn here—hearing instruction sage
From the good man—his estimate of time,
Of earth, and earthly blessings—of bright fields
Blossoming here, and nobler lands on high.
Here, too, the attentions kind, and sunny smiles
Of gentler woman, touch the soul, and tune
Its varied powers to harmony and peace.

Oh, once again t'enjoy this happy home—
This smiling circle, where domestic love
Is cherished by the sweet endearing jest,
Or harmless prank, around the social board,
Or in the fields where sportive toil is borne.

And oh, once more with her, the charm of all,
To walk abroad—whether upon the bank
Of that bright stream, pulling the beauteous flower
“Forget-me-not,” and planting it amid
Her waving tresses—or, on the verdant top
Of yonder woody height, viewing around
The undulating green fields, and the hills
Crowned with the spiry fir, or mountains blue.

Ascending in the distance, or the Tweed
Winding its glittering course through countless fields
Of grain—or listening songs of sweetest love
From birds amid the groves, blent with the low
Solemn of cattle grazing, and the bleat
From neighbouring hill, or sheep-fold in the plain.
Oh, every sight was beauty, every sound
Was harmony and love; down the steep west,
Ridgy with clouds of gold and crimson die,
The glorious sun drove his bright car, and threw
His mellow splendour o'er the gorgeous scene.
All nature seemed our own: for us the birds
Sang on the branches, and for us alone
The green fields were rejoicing. We did look
In other's faces, catching feeling from
Responsive glances, but we did not speak;
Yet well do I remember piercing beams
Shot from dark eyes, radiant with tears of joy,
And beauteous crimson hues passing across
The flushing cheek, bespeaking happiness
Too exquisite for earth. Another day
Found us reclined at noon among the tall
Green breckans: it was sultry,—but a breeze
Stole from the river, wafting on its wings
Transient refreshment. The stately steed,
The beauteous milk-white cow, and the meek sheep,
Browzed near us. All was bright: the heavens,
Arrayed in gorgeous clouds, hung over us—
The Teviot rolled in front—ten thousand trees
Waved their green-tops, and distant mountains pierced

The glad skies. Then, never to be effaced
From memory, I pressed her beauteous hand:
The touch was gentle, but its influence
Was most intensely thrilling, and I sighed
And looked, but still was silent; if, transfixed
In speechless admiration as I gazed
Upon her face resplendent, I forgot
Heaven—'twas but momentary, and I've paid
Severely since, for suffering earth's most bright
And dazzling idol to usurp the place,
Which God alone should fill! Another day
Found me, bright vision! riding forth with thee,
Amid the green fields which we loved so much.
Thy friend was with us; and we spent a day
Of rapturous excitement, as we spurred
Our brilliant palfreys o'er the flowery meads,
Or by the edge of corn-fields whose bright green
Was just acquiring autumn's yellow tinge.
The happy farmer blessed us as we passed,
And bade us God speed; and we still held on,
Climbing sometimes steep mounds, from whence we
viewed
The windings of the Tweed—now, 'midst the bowers
So leafy, hid from view, now glancing forth,
It seemed as if bright lakes lay scattered o'er
The extensive plain. 'Twas morning when we first
Set out that day: we rode amid the glare
Of noon-day, and we saw the evening sun
Purpling the west, and scattering beams of gold
Through the leafy trees, ere home again we sped.

That day we saw full many a landscape bright,
And many a tree, and meadow: gladsome were
The sounds we heard, inspiring sweetest thought,
As through the shady grove or glassy stream
We sped our way, happy—repeating oft
Lines from the poets, thanking them for words
Expressive of our feelings. The bright sun
Went down at last; and satisfied with bliss,
We sought our home again. But now how changed!
My love smiles not, and I am sick at heart.
I cast my eye across the landscape—'tis
As beautiful as ever; the green fields
Are still by gladsome herds and flocks cropped; gay
And verdant are the trees, the flowers still bloom,
The streams still sparkle, and the birds still sing;—
But ah! for me, in all this loveliness,
There is nor hope nor joy; my heart's a desert—
For I indulged the thought, that happiness
Was still in store for me. Bright visions sped
Rapid before my fancy, giving all
Earth's scenes a charm, additional to those
With which bright Nature clothes them,—making
bluer
The hare-bells, adding whiteness to the pure
Lilies, to the stream's superior brightness,
Casting more dazzling hues o'er sunset clouds,
And making richer far the mellow tones
Of thrushes and of blackbirds, as they sing
The day-star's lullaby. Things are changed now—
And woodland flowers and music have no charm

For me. Then farewell, home of peace and all
The virtues; yet though upon me never
Again those piercing dark eyes, from their orbs
Of eloquent light, shower beams of conscious love—
Or gleam with tears expressive, as they turn
Upon me in their beauty, telling of
Feelings and thoughts noble and pure beyond
The power of language; though the hand that oft
Planted thee flowers be now forgotten—though
Delights thee not to speak now of dear walks
With him in happier years; although his praise
Displeases thee—glad rather when the tongue
Of foul detraction withers his fame: thee
I can ne'er forget! The song ere-while
I sung to thee, I sing still: I may be
From all I loved in youth torn—my breaking
Heart may give the parting throb, responsive
To a mother's heaving breast; I may be
Brought to mingle the last tear with father,
Brothers, sisters, friends, and say farewell,
And then away to India's sultry clime.
With slow and lingering step, I might ascend
The sloping hill that hides my home from view,
And then turn round and see the chimney-top
Set, slowly as the sun, but ne'er to rise;—
I might do this and yet retain my soul:
But oh, I cannot leave sweet Teviotdale,
Where Teviot, bright and pure, winds lovely through
The yellow fields of corn and pasture green—
While the white flocks of sheep so sweetly feed:

I cannot say farewell to one who ever smiles—
Who's gentle as the lamb she feeds, upon
The summer lea. Oh, pull the little flower
“Forget-me-not,” and give it me; and though
I leave awhile, each hour I'll think on thee,
And for thy dear sake kiss the gentle pledge!

Retired, remote, behind the rising hill
And the vast moor, a dome of cottage form,
Stands out, plain, unpretending: 'tis my father's.
I have a mother there, and sisters kind,
And brothers, hearty, hale, and vigorous,
Who aid my sire in tillage, and sustain
His farming cares without; while within doors
Thrift, industry, prevail. The house, I said,
Is built in cottage form; a few old trees,
Only for shelter meant, give it an air
Of greater interest to the traveller
Who loves the picturesque; the fields in front
Stretch to a gurgling rill, which, having run
Many a long mile through the moors, and kissed
The willows and the rushes, here at last
Emerges into sight, and rolls along
Sparkling and clear. 'Twas here, a happy child,
I used the mimic plough, or dug with spade,
Or drove my little cart—a husbandman
In embryo. There, upon my little fields,
I cast my seed. Advanced to boyhood,
There I have spent the irksome day guarding
The flocks—have seen on summer morn the sun

Gilding the dew-drops, and his evening beams
Tinging the fields with gold: for happiness
All seasons were alike—each change but brought
A change of pleasure with it. We could scarce
Tell whether the sweet snow-drop, or the snow
Itself, most pleased us: we rejoiced alike
When the first seed was sown, and the last ears
Of golden grain gleamed bright on harvest-home.
This was my constant home, where I shook hands
With universal Nature; I could name
Each stone and turf—could talk familiarly
Of every field, and flock, and herd—and all
Was prized alike: it did not matter what
It might be, all was valued, all was loved,
Provided it was ours. The tree that waved
Its branches o'er our cottage, could not lose
A twig, without my marking it: the loss
Grieved me—'twas a misfortune calling up
Tears. Oh, we were happy! Within doors,
On winter's night, we had the blind man's game;
Or, when the moon shone clear, around the stacks,
And o'er the naked fields we coursed playing
At hounds and hares. The story were too long,
Of joyous winter nights spent, when the storm
Rattled and raved without, in telling tales
Of warlocks and of witches; or of hanging,
With breathless interest, upon the lips
Of some old soldier, quartered for the night
Upon us, as he spake of wars, and camps,
And fields of battle, while the crackling fire

Blazed cheerily. Nor does my memory dwell
Alone on scenes amusing. When full grown,
I yoked the horse and drove the manly plough
Myself across these fields; and, after day
Of toil, enjoyed the peasant's evening rest.
A peasant then myself, I well can sing
The peasant's cares—his joy intense when corn
Grew and herds throve—his altered look
When lowered the sky, and chilling eastern blasts
Blighted the fields. Yet memory can recall
No sorrow then, though griefs there must have been,
And oft I've wished to live these days again;—
Yes, oft I've thought of thee, my home, in youth,
When far away. Often, when sick at heart,
Do my eyes seek the quarter where the home
Of my dear boyhood lies;—the very breeze
Blows gentler when it blows from home, and seems
To waft me gladsome tidings, telling of
Skies blue or cloudy, dew-drops glittering
At gorgeous sunrise, or a smiling moon
Walking the skies at even—of purling streams
Meand'ring in the glen, or peasants stout
Toiling in the fields; and louder beats my heart,
And my eye brightens more, as memory
Brings up these beauteous scenes, while traversing
The dirty lanes and streets of city vast,
Where squalid misery, and want, and vice
Lurk. And the thought of thee, my home, has oft
Visited me, whilst standing, sick and sad,
Surrounded by disease and pain within

The hospital, hearing the frequent shriek
Of agony, feeling the fluttering pulse,
Or marking clammy dews standing upon
The sick man's forehead, giving intimation
Of death's approach:—coffins, and shrouds, and palls,
Got up in haste to hurry the poor dead
To a rude grave, sicken the soul and make it
Callous. Oh, for my first fine feelings, when
I looked on death, and thought my boyish grief
Would never terminate: oh, for that home again,
Where the tale of wo was always heard, and where
The needy's prayer for help was always answered—
Where moans of anguish seldom reached the ear,
And when they did so startled—where nor sights.
Unseemly or deformed would force themselves
Upon the eye, to grieve at first, and then
By frequent repetition to offend.

Why do I love the peasant's simple toil
Amidst the present, ask you? 'Tis because
I think of days untouched by harrowing care—
Where, 'midst the balmy air, from morn to noon,
From noon till dewy eve, we toiled, gaining
Health, exercise, and industry's sweet
Recompense. Day's labour o'er, our care ceased;
The pity of the world we needed not,
Nor did we care for envy or cold neglect;
We there could suffer no repulse, for we
Made no advances; nor could spiteful men
Look up and try to disenthrone us, for
We stood not then upon fame's pedestal.

Why do I love this moor, so drear and waste,
Ask you?—'Tis far from man, vile sordid man!
I spurn him when I mingle with wild flowers,
Rivulets, and glens, where lambs are feeding,
And plovers, larks, and heath-fowl, mix their notes
With their innocent bleat—unheard the voice
Of men. This is my refuge-city from
The cares of life, and scowl of creditors
Whose day I cannot meet. Then I'll away
And seek my native glen; my soul shall there
Gain a short respite from its wo—shall there
Become sedate and holy; feelings lost,
Amidst the city's turmoil, shall again
Well up and yield refreshment, shedding peace
And joy upon a heart wasted and torn.

Yes, Home! thou art his refuge, thou alone
His sanctuary art, whom cold neglect
Withers or chills—who, having for the weal
Of others spent his prime, or lost health
In service of his country, for his pains
Reaps calumny or scorn! Should such a fate
O'ertake me, I will home; a mother's arms
Are ever open; for a mother's love
Ever outlives all changes and all wrecks.

At Home!—'tis night;—why do I so admire
The gleaming stars, the blue skies, and the moon?
And whence the magic influence which the rill,
Tinkling upon my ear, communicates?
'Tis from association.—These serene
And calm objects, are linked by memory

To the joys of infancy, childhood, youth;
These stars ne'er gleam so brightly, these moonbeams
Ne'er so gaily fall, as when we see them
From the cottage door, at which, in early youth,
We stood, and tried to count or catch them. Nor
Shall any village ever interest, like
The one upon whose green we sported glad,
Having just bounded from the school!—Sad scene
Of tasks and tears! In every lane we meet
Familiar faces—men who stroked our heads
When boys—men looked up to, and trusted in
As oracles—sage politicians, talking
At house corners, or in workshops, of misrule,
Burdensome taxation, national debt:
We gave them reverence in past years, and still
Meet them with pleasure. In that village, too,
We meet old school-mates—perhaps a mother
Carrying her babe—a care-worn artisan,
It may be—they look altered, but we feel
That we have altered too, and so exchange
Sympathy. Nor ever can we find glens
Like our father's, search we for them through all
The world—nor ever any hills surpassing
The braes we climbed, when boys, gathering sloes,
Brambles, and berries,—stripping the hazel bush
Of many a twig, and pulling primroses,
Fox-tails, and lady-fingers—hearing sounds
Diversified and rich, borne on the breeze—
And could not tell our joy. Delightful scenes!
Where oft my friend and I have loitered, loath

To part: that friend!—where is he?—haply far away
Across the seas, or gone into the grave:
Or, worse—alive, perhaps his fine warm heart
Seared by misfortune.—Dearest female friend—
Companion meet for one who loves to walk
And view the works of God; for idle themes
Displease thee—art thou sad to leave thy glen,
Since destiny demands? I know thou art;
For it has been to thee, as this to me,
The scene of happier days. Of patriarch worth
Was thy dear father; he is long since dead.
Thy friend, thy lover too, is gone; and ah!
Rude was the stroke, which from thy fond embrace
Severed thy brother: yet be not cast down—
There is a heaven!—and even earth's scenes may yet
Glad thee. Thou thy dear glen mayst oft revisit—
Its scenes a melancholy joy shall yield
To thy kind feeling heart; for though nor stone,
Nor crag, nor shaggy hazel bush, nor fir
Of lofty size, nor gentle meadow flower,
Nor rill tingling, nor voice of bird, nor lambs
Bleat, but tells of vanished joys; yet, ever dear
Jemima! well thou know'st there is a charm
In grief, surpassing all earth's boasted joys.

Thus let it be, that our dear home of youth
Should ne'er again be seen—though we should ne'er
Live o'er again these unsuspecting days,
Ne'er share again in culture, never watch
The progress which the corn makes, nor plant flowers
In the cottage-garden, nor tread the heath

With firm elastic step, or leap the fence,
Or spring the miry ditch, to reach our home—
Although the great delight of visiting
Our home, and finding friends happy and well,
Of being served at once with prompt repast,
Should ne'er be ours; what matters it? Our home
Is in our hearts! We carry home about
With us, go where we will; we cannot meet
A kindly welcome in a farmer's hall,
But father, mother, brothers, sisters, all
Surround us; trees and hills, flowers, streams, and
plains,
Whenever seen, call up our home, and link
Our hearts and souls, as if they were indeed
The very scenes of infancy and youth.

But, standing on my very natal soil,
How can it be that I should ever know
Save patriotic feeling?—'tis a scene
Splendid. The lofty range of Arran's peaks,
Far off, yet bright—the Clyde, a golden lake,
Seen in the west; Benlomond, towering high
Above the assemblage vast of mountains,
That bound the prospect in the distant north;
Far to the south, Ailsa and Carrick rise;
While nothing over the vast solitude
That spreads within, save moss and heather rise,
Excepting here and there a verdant spot:
Yet 'tis not barren. Poor as the soil is,
It nursed in other years the patriot strong;
These solitary wilds are made immortal

By the name of Wallace. Cold as the breeze is,
It could not quench the ardent flame that burned
And blazed for liberty;—and why should it
Our ardour for the house of Loudon chill,
Whose gothic turrets, above flowery lawns
And stately woods towering, make glad the heart
Of peasant toiling in the adjacent moors?
A martyr for the truth, there Campbell lived;
And there, of late, lamented Flora Hastings found
A peaceful tomb. Beautiful shade! no more
Injured by slander's breath. Yonder's Drumclog,
Where Scotland's famous band of worthies fought
And conquered. Matchless moor! that rang with
praise,
Worthy of Zion in her noblest times,
Ere yet the dauntless covenant heroes drew
The shining steel or levelled the musket
That scattered on the heath Jehovah's foes:
There are the fields and church-yards, where repose
The ashes of the martyrs for the truth.
Lochgoin is there, only a cottage; yet
Beneath that humble roof, the brave and good
Found shelter from a fiercer storm than e'er
Swept o'er the moorlands. The peasant there
Was born and nourished, whose heroic deeds
All poets of all times shall still record.
On such a soil standing, who would not catch
The patriot's fire? Who would not loathe and hate
All tyrants? Who would not lift both his hands
To Heaven, and swear allegiance to the faith?

Oh, not in palaces alone reside
The noble! Yes, they dwell, too, on the moors!

But oh, my country, turn I where I may,
Thy every spot is sacred! I have oft,
With hospitable friend, traversed thy scenes
Of grandeur; I have seen thy castles grim,
Thy abbeys, thy cathedrals hoar with age,
Have climbed high ruined turrets, or gone down
Into deep vaults—have seen the grass waving
From aged chinks, or shining ivy wreathed
Around thy rude grey stones—the bright spots
marked

Where thy grand geniuses first saw the light.
But though I much admire thee for the past,
I love thee for the present. I have shared,
In many a house, parental kindness. I
Have often shared a sister's kindness—oft
A brother's have I shared; in every joy
Domestic I have joined, enjoying both
The sacred and the sportive—pleased alike
To see the mother fondle her babe, or
The father's eye brighten as his dear boy
Repeated well his school task. There is one
I shall not soon forget—a female dear—
A widow;—she had noble sons, yet I
Within her dome had a son's privilege.
I often took my leave, and oft returned,
And aye was welcome—certain to receive,
After a toilsome journey, cheerful smiles,
A blazing fire, and hospitable fare.

She was indeed a mother; all my griefs
And all my joys she knew; I gave relief
To all my cares, by pouring in her ear
My secret feelings. Excellent mother
Of excellent sons; for, reared in virtue's ways,
They well repay her cares, and toils, and love.

I had another home. A daughter there
Acted the part of mother to a sire
Bowing with age, and four young brothers who
Both loved and trusted her. I never met
A finer model of devotedness
To duty. A frank, kind, honest girl—
She nobly did her part, and well supplied
The fearful blank, by death made in past years.

I had another friend, a bachelor,
Hale, hearty, loving. I remember well
His mansion. On a bank it stood, in front
Of the Grampian hills, Scotland's Campania;
The rich and beautiful Strathmore lay stretched
Between. 'Twas a sweet residence. Down sloped
Our garden all around, fragrant in flowers
And rich in fruit; and from our window we
Could mark the lovely Aisla, winding along
Through many a fertile field, adorned with trees,
Planted in clumps at regular distances.
The bachelor had a friend who lived with him,
Sharing his board; nor ever saw I two
More like each other. Yes, they were indeed
Companions meet; and they were sterling men,
Of capital parts, though blunt and plain, as men

Reared far from cities. They would speak their mind

Frankly, without disguise—give you at once
Their thoughts of men and things. They were well
read

In scripture too, having from youth enjoyed
The labours of an excellent pastor—
A man of God, who now enjoys on high
The heavenly crown. It was, indeed, a joy
At times to sojourn with those noble men
A week or so. They had good store of books,
Which we could ply as hard at as we chose
Within doors; and, when tired of reading, might
Go forth and try in field the peasant's work
Or cultivate the garden, or assist
In rude repairs effected on fences,
Palings, or park-gates—enjoying the while
The farm-house joke, or the strong sturdy sense
Of the bachelor himself. At meal times too,
And after night-fall, it was excellent
To sit as critics upon sermons, settling
The knotty doctrinal points, speaking our minds
Freely of ministers, though care was *ta'en*
To venerate the cloth. Here we could come
Or go just as it liked us. And we took
Advantage of our licence—late or early,
At morning, noon or night, we sought and found
Ready admission to the most rare and choice
Of bachelor's hall; of stated hours, such
As married men keep, we never dreamed; wanting

The dear restraint of female despotism
To curb and check us.—A hearty hand-shake,
An open door, a hospitable board,
And a laugh to season excellent fare,
Were always at our service; ceremony
Was out of the question, and a frown or look
Unkindly we ne'er saw: This was our house
Of call, so often as we wished to view
The Grampian hills; for we had but to speak
Our will, and at the large hall-door a fine
Pony of mettle waited us. Away
We bounded o'er the lawn, and came again
Early or late, as pleased us—sometimes too,
On foot we ventured forth, carrying with us
A goodly musket—not indeed for death,
But merely to alarm at the hill foot,
Where heather bloomed, and whins, and wild briars
grew,

The timid rabbits.—These were days indeed
Of exquisite happiness, and we oft
Were told so by the bachelor himself,
Boasting at supper time of the delights
Of single blessedness; regarding not
The foolish laughter of a love sick boy,
Naming us so.—Excellent man, adieu!
God spare you long, and bless you! Let me now
Haste to the cottage of another friend—
A gifted clergyman—a man of wit,
Fancy, and genuine virtue. His cot
O'erlooked a noble river. Beautiful,

And fair, and rich, in summer was the scene—
As fancy pictures Adam's paradise
To have been, before he fell. On either hand
A valley stretched around; the river wound
Its bright course through the gorgeous centre—trees
Covered with richest blossoms, on all hands
Were waving in the sun light; right across
From the parlour window lay a flowery holm
Of exquisite beauty, and the clear smoke curled
Above the luscious trees, that marked the abode
Of peaceful life. On the blue sky above
The laughing clouds hung; while, upon the near
Horizon, trees and domes, mansions and cots,
Were brightly painted. Oh, I knew it once
A joyful home: the birds sang o'er the stream;
And round the village, boys and girls, blushing
Like roses, sported happy. This, I say,
Was mind's, was heart's, was genius's abode;
And yonder stream shall flow on many a year
Ere such another on her flowery banks
Shall pitch his dwelling; for the charming scene
Was quite in unison with his fine taste,
And gave him exquisite pleasure. But alas!
His happiness was transient; a vile race,
Sordid and base, surrounded him. His rich
And varied genius gained him enemies;
The tongues of slander and foul calumny,
Be sure, were active. Yonder bloated coward
Headed the van, and so the slaughterous deed
Was perpetrated;—for, as false as hell,

(I oftentimes think falser,) were the tales
Which slander propagated, to deprive
Of honour, and to cast on the wide world
This gifted being. Yet I need not mourn,
For he is happy now, better away!
For what avails the richest scenery,
Defaced by grovelling, low, and **sordid men**,
Who never could appreciate half his worth;
His dwelling now is on the banks of Thames,
Where soon I hope to meet him and enjoy
Delightful converse. Let me breathe awhile
And sing the woods of Britain, e'er I take
My flight to merry England. O ye woods,
Planted so thickly o'er old England's soil,
That to the traveller speeding on his way,
She wears the aspect of a forest vast,
Unvaried, save where yellow fields of corn
Gleam near us as we pass, and mansions, cots,
And domes, peer out between the verdant boughs;
Rapid and far although we drive, the same
Is still repeated—cottages and domes,
And mansions gay, shining through trees,
Present themselves for ever; while above,
Gorgeous and dazzling clouds o'er canopy
The interminable landscape. Nor less
Lovely ye on Scotia's hills and dales,
Scattered on beauteous shining pleasure lawns,
Or on the green hill side or plain below;
Or where, clustering in clumps, ye beautify
The swelling mansion, or to gothic towers .

And ruins give added interest. O what were
Without the rows and clumps of gay green trees
That shadow or surround them, the proud domes
Of our nobility! Without the woods
That overhang them, what our mighty streams
And noble rivers, holding on their path
Majestic to the ocean! What our rocks,
And beetling cliffs, and crags, were there no shrubs
Or trees to wave from them! What were our brooks,
Did they ne'er show their silvery tresses
Through dancing green leaves! O what were our
lakes

Without their fringe of trees! Our villages
Not girded by green woods, what are they? Nay,
Our palaces and cities, wanting trees,
Would want their finest ornament; and then
What would our lovers do without the woods
And trysting trees? Chiefly, ye rich green firs,
We thank you for the beauty ye afford,
And shelter too, to ancient Caledon—
Thick planted round the lofty mountain's base,
Or straggling to the top amid the rocks,
Capping the naked barrenness. And save
That ye in frequent stripes are seen, how bleak,
And barren would our moorland fields appear!
But sweet it is to hear, in the lone wild,
The blackbird's song from your green bosom, where
Ye shield the herdsman's cottage; pleasant too
The fragrant scent ye scatter o'er the waste
At dewy even. Young rural lovers, who

Live in the moorlands, I advise ye seek
The green woods when ye woo: the fir *planting*
Will yield you fragrant shelter, every thing
Will there combine to fan the flame of love
In souls congenial; on the whispering breeze
The richest odours float—above, the thrush
And linnet sing in chorus—lovely flowers
Bloom at your feet, and softer than the couch
Of ancient Grecian is the mossy seat
Inviting you to rest—a tiny brook
Murmurs not far away—the timid hare,
Skulking from man, bounds off at your approach—
And every sight and sound is innocence;—
This, if a full May moon be on the sky,
Is sure the place for kisses, sighs, and smiles.

Ye noble woods! How much of joy have ye
Yielded me since a boy; for then how oft
Amid your boughs I roamed, seeking the nest
Of cushat, mavis, blackbird, linnet. Yet
I robbed them not, nor wished their little hearts
To beat on my account. How proudly then
I climbed, adventurous, the majestic tree,
Upon whose topmost bough that ominous bird,
The magpie, had constructed her rude dome;
The summit gained, perched like a crow, I sat
And viewed with transport the rude fields below,
Or waved my bonnet o'er my head in sign
Of boyish triumph; for such feats were then
The source of boundless pride, and pleasure too.
Nor yet to bird and fowl alone do ye

Refuge afford; for whilst the blast roars loud
Amidst your lofty tops, your lowlier boughs
Shelter the shivering herd that in the storm
Seeks you. Sheltered by you, along the wild
And moorish plain, the crops have gained good size
Despite the chilling blasts. The farmer who
Dwells in the wilds oft owes you much, for ye
Spread your strong arms around his barn-yard lone,
And shield it from the tempest. His frail cot,
Did ye not guard it from the hurricane,
Would oftentimes fall to pieces. Travellers
Weary and worn have often blessed ye, woods,
Either for shelter from the raging blast,
Or torrid heat fierce scorching. Have I not
Read of great warriors, who amidst your shades
Have found a refuge from the fierce pursuit
Of angry foemen! Grand oaks still live,
Spreading their broad arms to the sun, within
Whose friendly bosom kings have safety found
From subjects armed against them; and, ye woods,
Who shall describe your beauties as the year
Revolves, still changing only to exhibit
Changes of beauty. Beautiful in spring,
When buds are bursting and the young green leaf
Scatters fresh fragrance—gorgeous in summer,
When in thy thick-leaved glory thou dost stand
Compelling admiration; and when mild
And mellow autumn tinges you, what hues
And motley colours ye present, melting
The souls of men to pleasing melancholy—

Musing on human change and sure decay!—
And when at last rough winter strips you bare,
What dismal music oftentimes ye discourse
As fitful gales sweep past at intervals;
But when the storm is up, ye imitate
The thunder, or the noise of ocean's waves,
Tossing your bold, bleak, scraggy arms on high
In brave and fierce defiance; or when decked
In hoar frost, how resplendently ye shine
On winter's morning, or at night when the moon
Rules in the sky; when snow is on the ground
Your tall bleak trunks and powdered branches yield
Double effect to the landscape. Nor yet
Are wanting, even in winter, of your tribe
To charm the eye with verdure. We can boast
Our charming evergreens, of every class,
Our woodbines, and our poplars, and our firs.

Thus I, to gain relief from rising fume
Of anger, have essayed to sing the woods:
But I have done, for Britain's Capital
Beckons me on. Great Queen of cities, hail!

END OF BOOK III.

BOOK IV.

FATIGUED almost with sameness, through the fields
Of cultivated England we have sped
For two long summer days our rapid course;
For still the same rich prospect met the eye,—
Lawns, mansions, cottages, and fields of corn
Peering through verdant trees; but now the scene
Changes. On either hand the cottages
Increase in number and in elegance;
Of form more bright and rich, the flowers that bloom
Against the walls, with ivy interspersed
And honey-suckle sweet, and eglantine.
The mansions on the gently sloping hills
Peep out more numerous too, and from the woods,
Domes still more splendid show their battlements
And lofty towers,—large cultivated tracks
Adorned with shrubs and golden dahlias
Are often passed; and spacious orchards too,
Bending with luscious fruit. Rich gardens next,
Stored with each useful or luxurious herb,
Or vegetable, which man's palate craves,

Meet us by turns; nor this the only change,—
The loaded wain, or empty car, or smart
Cabriolet, or richly gilded coach,
Pass and repass us, and our spirits thrill
As still the traffic thickens: for we know
That London is at hand; and, lo! at once
Hyde Park appears; and what a gorgeous scene,
As underneath the dark and verdant woods,
A thousand chariots glittering in the sun,
Bearing along the noble and the gay,
The wealthy and the proud, flash on the sight
Of the bewildered stranger, on his way
To the gigantic city! Yes, the scene
Is splendid beyond language. High above,
Clouds huge as mountains, bright as virgin snow,
Or red as glowing fire, o'ercanopy
Whole streets of palaces, rearing their proud
And sparkling summits o'er the lofty trees
That spread their branching arms across the lawns,
So green and flowery. Oh, what soul would not
A scene so glorious raise! Behold one cloud
Of size immense, like a bright mountain,
Tower above yon range of glittering palaces
That bound the dazzling view. Once and again
I turn to gaze upon the airy mass
Of congregated vapour, filled with joy
And wonder at its grandeur and its power.
There too the lake, shaded with birch, spreads wide
Its pure blue bosom to the glorious sun,
Adding fresh beauty to the enrapturing scene;

For who, without a thrill of rapture, e'er
 Looked for the first time on a scene, rivalled
 Some say, in ancient days when giant Rome
 Was mistress of the earth ; but quite unmatched
 In modern times, search we the world all through.
 For, try to count the number of those gay
 And shining vehicles, that as you gaze
 Wheel past in swift succession, and you soon
 Own yourself baffled—'Tis impossible
 To tell what thoughts of grandeur and of wealth
 Visit our souls, as in a labyrinth
 Of shining palaces, we wander on
 Through streets and squares of architecture grand,
 Where young and gay nobility are seen
 Pacing along in bright and flowing robes,
 Guided by nurse or sober governante.

And I remember yet, not less my joy,
 My wonder more, coming to Oxford street;
 For there the gorgeous scenery of shops
 Dazzled my vision, heretofore unused
 To grander mercantile display, than what
 Old Glasgow's Trongate, or the famed North-bridge
 Of gay Edina offers. Whittington,
 (London's Lord Mayor afterwards,) 'tis said,
 Felt disappointment, when a country lad,
 He first arrived in the metropolis,
 Nor anywhere beheld those golden streets
 And marble palaces, of which in dreams
 He oft had boyish glimpses. Not so I—
 London seemed unto me a city of gold,

A peerless queen, all hung with gems and pearls.
She filled my soul with fine bewilderment,
Capturing every sense, entrilling me;
Not fabled El Dorado more entranced
The Arabian Night adventurers, when first
They wandered through her squares magnificent,
And could not speak their wonder; than did she,
The queen of cities, when from Ayrshire boune,
I first alighted in her magic streets,
And looked my admiration—Oh ! ye shops
Sparkling with gold and silver, how shall pen
Of mortal poet shadow out your grand
Unspeakable magnificence!—How try
To give the dwellers in the Gallowgate,
Calton, or Gorbals, one thought adequate
Of the reality! shops too, where the lace
Of Brussels, Turkey carpets, tapestry
Of richest sort, mingle with those
Where pastry, sweetcakes, and grand smelling roasts,
Are witchingly displayed, demand, if not
Immortal powers, at least a human pen
Far loftier than mine to speak their praise.

A change of scene and feeling waited me,
On entering Smithfield, where the stately herds
That lately cropped old England's pasturefields,
Or grazed on hills of Caledonia,
In thousands stood. It was a day
Of business and of bustle; but my soul
Took flight from mercenary bargainers,
Buyers and sellers, to the happy hills

And green fields, where those peaceful animals
Erewhile had roamed at large; feeding sometimes,
And whiles reclined at ease on the soft grass,
Chewing the cud, and seeking whiles the screen
Of shady trees, when the meridian sun
Flamed in the summer sky, or fierce blast swept
The meadow or the hill—there stood the sheep
That gemmed the verdant fields, or mingled with
The gray stones on the hills, or mountains high,—
Some from the fertile plains of Berwick; some
From the green Lomonds, or the Grampians huge;
And I remember yet the strange delight
With which I stroked the heads of two young queys
Of Ayrshire breed, weeping almost;
Partly for joy, and partly too for grief.

Wandering amidst the endless maze of streets,
And lanes, we enter Leadenhall, and found
The market there; dead game of every sort.
There I beheld the hare bloody and stiff,
That erewhile bounded from the heath, and scoured
And rushed along the hill, proud, casting up
Its heels as safe it ran. Poor Puss! how oft
Have I descried you skulking on the braird
Early on summer morn; or, on the ground
Of safe protector, with thy joyous mates
Gamboling wild, in safety conscious;
There, too, the fowls domestic hung, which brought
The happy peasant's home near to my heart.
And there, of lovelier plumage, the wild fowls
That over hill and moor at freedom flew.—

Bird of the moors! I've seen thee with thy tail
Crested with hoar frost, sitting on the heath,
Or lofty raise thy wing, and loudly cry
Thy mate—I've seen thee in the mist, both large
And joyous too; but now thy gay career
Is ended—there the partridge, too, beside
Thee lies—beautiful bird ! in broad day light
I've seen thee venture out, retiring, shy,
Crouching by furrows ; or at gloaming hour,
When far less coy, freely you moved about
The fields, in pairs or coveys. I have seen
Thee flutter from thy young; or I have heard
Thy melancholy note, disconsolate,
Crying thy mate at even—Alas ! in vain
The sportsman, during day, had scattered you,
And found thy mate his prey,—but oh ! those fields
Where ye did pick and chirp are dear to me.

* In Covent garden lies the luscious fruit,
Rich stored in baskets, or on thousand stands,—
And must we only think of the poor joy
Which that delicious fruit shall yield the rich
At table, and not of shades, and leafy trees,
Where green it lately hung, bending the branches ?
Or when it was a germ, and all the vast
Gardens were blossoming ? Must we forget
The gardener's delight, as with his spade,
Or pruningknife, industriously he toiled,
Happy to rest at night, and glad to rise
At morn, and find no nipping frost or blight
Had bit the flower ? And happier still, I guess,

When, with his wife and children, he the fruit
Abundant plucked,—beautiful too those flowers
In bunches large—but lovelier, richer far,
When they adorned the cottage, hanging round
Its wall, or set in gay parterre before
The door; or in luxuriant sheaves amid
The green lawns of the dome, or castle huge;
Or from the honey-suckle dazzling out,
Embracing the walls in front the village range.

Mark-Lane, where merchandise is made in corn,
We visit next.—Behold the very grain
That over England's broad plains lately waved
In yellow glory,—or on Scotia's vales,—
Lovelier still on Erin's isle prolific.
Here too the grain of distant climes, more mild
And genial than ours, brought to supply
The sad deficiency, when blasts have nipped
The farmer's hope at home—How oft his heart
Was cheered throughout the season, when the drops
Of glittering dew, upon the tender blade
In myriads hung ; or when the brushing ears
Stood level, and rank, in silent summer eve,—
Or ripe in yellow autumn, hoping and fearing
In reference to the treasure, now shown for sale !
How oft that grain called out the traveller's praise,
Waving in open plains, or peering from
The woods !—All hail and prosperous, ye farmers be !
And all who trade in corn ; for 'tis man's food,
Sent him in mercy from the God of heaven,

Noble employment ! for, through your hands
The produce comes, by which mankind are blessed.

And I remember yet, how my heart beat
At thoughts of other days, when I did watch
The progress of the crops, thrashing the corn,
Or ploughing the fields, or sowing the seed
With measured step, glad often to see it
Carry the pearly dew, and in the ear
Wave full, first green, but in the harvest yellow.
Alas ! how grieved was I when it got blight,
Or in harvest became a heap of rottenness.

Some other day, we pay a visit to
The Museum ; epitome vast of
The world, in both the present and the past ;
Rich in the arts of men, but richer far
In nature—here all beasts, fowls, insects, fish,
Stand represented ; what variety
Their tribes present ! the plumage of the fowl
How rich in hue ! all pebbles, precious stones,
And ores are here collected : each variety
Of human art is here. What age does not
Contribute to this great store ! Not Greece alone,
Or Rome of boasted civilization,
Exhibit the arts in grandeur. Egypt
Has greater wonders—India has her gods—
And China has her arts—rude Africa,
And the islands of the South, exhibit here
Their skill and genius—but days and years
Are needed for study here ; and viewing

The whole, humility is learned. Our hearts
 Sadden at knowing so little. Britain, too,
 May learn not to be proud in aught, except
 Herself barbaric deem—for other states
 And nations can as noble works of art
 Exhibit as herself; for o'er the earth
 Mankind are greatly like—let Christian, Jew,
 Greek, and Mahomedan, learn brotherhood!

What multitudes of ships float on the Thames!
 Their masts a forest, and their hulls a vast
 City resemble. On its banks, what goods
 They fill and empty—on the creaking crane,
 What casks are hung—what horses, men and carts,
 And waggons are employed to bear these goods!
 Yet what are all the ships upon the Thames,
 When numbered with the docks!—the London dock,
 And the St Kathrine's—the India East and West—
 What piles of casks and packages are laid
 Within these stately walls! behold what goods
 A single ship unloads! one instance take,
 A noble ship from India just arrived;
 Slowly with lever power the ponderous gates
 Unfold, and the grand vessel takes her berth.
 Around her masts the furled sails are bound—
 Goods crowd her decks—spars, empty water-casks,
 Disabled masts, and broken boat-oars, with
 The figure on her bow sadly defaced,—
 All speak of recent storm, and weather rough.
 The jolly sailors ply the windlass hard,
 With well-strung muscle, and most cheerily

In chorus roar sea-songs—Oh noble lads,
Tell me your cause of joy ! I envy you.
Have you been long away ? Have you been scorched
With India's sultry sun, or have the gales
Of the far north pinched you with horrid cold ?
Or have you had tempests at sea, by which
Your noble ship was near ingulphed, and ye
Yourselves made food for the fishes ?—or have ye
Heard of your sweethearts' happiness and faith ?—
Or that your wives, mothers, and children thrive ?
Ye are so happy, I could wish myself
A jolly sailor, singing happy songs,
When newly landed on my native shore.
The Captain looks most joyous,—he has had
His perils indeed ; but they are over now—
His voyage is made—his wife and child are safe.
The owners haste on board, all of them pleased ;
And they have cause to be so—it has proved
A voyage good and fortunate for them !
Now safely moored,—the cargo gets discharged,
And such a cargo ! Piles of casks, all filled
With precious spices, indigo or rice,
Sugar or cotton, one by one ascend
On creaking cranes, while brawny labourers
Are sweating on the quay ;—some loading carts,
Some dragging hurdles to the storehouse vast,
When to the lofty roof, pile above pile,
Casks, packages, and hogsheads, proudly tower.
This is the scene that shows what London is,
The storehouse, and the market of the world.

Oh, bid the ships be prosperous ! All hail
To British seamen ! carry to each port
Our manufactured goods, and o'er each sea
Bring goods from foreign climes ; that so these ships
May ever be employed—that crowds of men
May never slack, nor din of business cease.

Would I had been in London, to have seen
The coronation, or the nuptial day
Of dear Victoria ; or her visit to
The city, or at least some Greenwich fair,
Where streams of people roll—'twas mine to see
The launch at Woolwich, of the Trafalgar ;—
So on the top of spire of Woolwich church
I take my lofty stand, and sing the launch.
From morning up till noon, the carriages
On all the roads on either side of Thames,
Raising vast clouds of dust, came thundering down
To Woolwich : 'twas indeed a wond'rous show.—
The great proportion of the multitude
Took to the dock yards, or the heights around,
Or to the banks of Thames—a loftier site
By far we occupy, envying not
The coronation-day, with all its pomp
And glitter, Greenwich fair, or Queen's levee ;—
A nobler scene's before us ! Essex' plains
Are full in view, across the river broad,
Upon whose verdure oxen huge are seen,
Browsing in thousands ; and amidst them, streams
Of men blackening the scene, as on they haste
To join their fellows on the river's brink.

The river's brink is crowded, and the plains
Stretching behind,—Steamers from London-bridge
Ply on the river, crowded with the gay
And beautiful of London—small boats, too,
Numerous, and showy, lift the oar between.
The English flag plays on a thousand masts,
And all is dashingness, and jollity.
Woolwich itself, skirted with glittering domes,
And gorgeous greenwoods—there its arsenal,
And there its barracks, overhung by clouds
Sulphurous and burning, formed a magnific scene.
Oh! never sure before was gallant ship
Welcomed to the ocean, by a nobler crowd
Of varied objects—cannons' roar below
Was answered back by Heaven's artillery,
Thundering above, in the now darkened skies ;
When off the bulwark slid, amid the cheers
Of the stupendous crowd, into the waves.
How gracefully cheered on by British tars,
Arrayed in white, the mighty vessel glid
Under a triumphal arch ; but the clouds
Gathered above, darkening the scene. Thunders
Roared in the firmament, scattering the crowd,
Who hurry off for fear, making the scene
Incredibly sublime. Above,—the heavens
Moving in darkness,—while below,—the men
Rolling away in masses ; carriages
Bounded like lightning off, while on Thames' banks
Thousands of boats were landing—It was grand,
Not ominous of ill, the “ intonat ”

Bonus" of the old poet crossed our minds ;
We thought of clouds of smoke, and strife of war,
Curling in triumph round the victor ship.

And now in Whitechapel we saunter on
On Saturday night,—the lamps disclosing
A moving mass of men, waggons, and carts,
And butchers' shops, hung round with beef and pork,
Fruit of all kinds, and vegetables green,
Exposed at doors, or on uncovered stands.
The noise deepens, of men crying for sale
Their merchandise, potatoes, oysters, fruit.
The crowds are labourers and artisans,
Spending their week-earned fee. With business-men
Of good connexion, well it fares—not so
With young beginners, who on the success
Of this one night depend to meet the bills
Of Monday morning ; and not so with those
Depending on the merest accident,
To gain to-morrow's breakfast,—bosoms beat ;
Many for fear, and some perchance for joy.
The honest labourer and his thrifty wife
Are glad to-night, providing for themselves
And family, the Sunday's dinner rich.
Such may be known ; they boldly force away
Through the dense crowd, to make cheap merchandise.

The corner shops are taverns, ringing now
With joy and merriment, filled to the door
With men who spend the week in toil and care.
This night they sing for happiness, and gain
Elysian dreams the while they smoke their pipes ;

Hark! Yorkshiremen are roaring English songs,
While happy Scotsmen chant the notes of Burns,
M'Neill, or Ramsay, or poor Tannahill.

Yet while we view such scenes, we sometimes pause
And moralize, and ask, is there no pain,
No sorrow felt in London?—Ah me! yes:
In the bright park, amidst the gay and young,
Yon pale face told that all was not in bloom:
The wrinkled brow of age peeps out amidst
The grandest trappings—yonder see a group
In weeds of wo,—within these splendid domes
Not all is joy,—the beauteous daughter pines
Under decline,—insidious disease!
The mother pants for breath,—the father dies
And leaves a helpless offspring—and lo! there
The loving husband, gazing on the face
Of his young wife, anticipating death
In her too lovely cheek,—and yonder rich
Old man has lost his son and heir; his young
Widow is yonder, in her garb of grief,—
How thoughtfully that lovely girl sits there
At her window, waiting her lover's form,
Amidst the crowds that pass!—another sits,
And weeps, reading once and again the note
Of disappointment—a third has lover true,
And she loves him; but she has woes enough;—
Another holds her pledge.—Oh yes! within
These brilliant walls, you widows, orphans find,
And cruel husbands, and tyrannic sires,
Ungrateful sons, and ills innumerable.

But let us midst the ceaseless stream of men
Pass onwards, to some mighty thoroughfare,
Where shake the streets with rattling curricles.
Here all is bustle—yet has every man
His separate aim, and many shifts are tried.
Oh buy from that poor female, whose pale child
Hangs on her breast—but see, you're beckoned on
By yonder coachman to his omnibus.
Hark to that boy,—who to the heedless throng
Bawls all the day—“come buy my ware, 'tis cheap!”
Defeats innumEROUS these endure; yet still
They persevere—such is true industry.

On leaving thoroughfares, and splendid walks,
Come with us to the alleys, closes, lanes,
And dark old streets of this stupendous town,
Where filth, and vice, and poverty, are seen
In all their ugliness, shocking the eye—
All here are vicious, ignorant as brutes,
Selfish as ravens, nothing do they know,—
Oh nothing more, than drive the Jewish bargain.
A generous wish, not one, e'er crossed their minds;
But in a horrid thoroughfare of rags
They ply their merchandise, in meanest things;
Yet here gin-palaces are found, and there
Yon tattered blackguard drinks and smokes his pipe,
Quite free from care; beside him quaffing round
The poisonous draught, are seen his wife and child,
Perfectly happy, although meantime clad
In filthy rags. A tawdry company
You here behold; a horrid idiot smile

Plays on the cheeks; some laugh aloud,
While others deal in oaths and blasphemies;
Do we not ask, are these the humankind?
Ten thousand voices answer, "Yes, we are!
Bone of your bone are we, flesh of your flesh;
If we are low, degraded, sunk, or vile,
Bear ye the blame; for we no duty learned,
Save how to rob, and steal—no sympathy
Ye give us, and you get none in return."
How fast yon little urchin to the den
Accursed speeds, where a vile mother waits,
To clutch the loaf, filched from some baker's shop,
By her darling girl—see, how the hag "grins
Horrible a ghastly smile," as Kate,
Her own dear Kate, flings in her filthy lap
The goodly prize. Ne'er was there happier child
Than young Kate Hopkins, while her mother praised
The noble feat, to a vile squalid crew
Of hideous gossips, met to drink, and hear
The rare exploit extolled. At a window near,
Hung o'er with ballads, story-books, and plays,
Stands one in pensive mood, reading some song
That happier days recalled, and gave a tinge
Of melancholy pleasure to his mind.
The lapse of years that intervened had vanished,
And he, again, stood on the cottage hearth,
And heard the swell of music, from the lips
Of one, one he had loved, too dearly for his peace.
But now, how changed! long weary years had gone,
And he had seen, and suffered much—the touch

Of deep untimely grief was on his brow,
And written wrinkles prematurely there—
Possessed perhaps an honest noble heart,
Based on the pedestal of heaven-born virtue,
And would return the scowl of worthless splendour—
Yet felt, amid that Babel of the world,
The curse of poverty, 'Twas not the pomp
Of fashion, fluttering in its starry pride,
That mocked him with its splendour; 'twas the blush
Of virtuous pride that mantled o'er his cheek,
As he surveyed himself,—his poor habiliments
Had cast away their sleek and glossy hue,
And left them but the ghost of other days.
While pausing thus, and pondering on himself,
He turned and looked around—when, lo, a friend.
Good heavens! and is it you, we both exclaimed?
Naming each other; for we were youthful friends:
His father's house, set 'mid the rural fields,
Was once our common home. And is it asked
About my present friend?—Then, well, I know
'Tis all that we supposed, while yet he stood
Unknown before us: ne'er was there nobler youth.
A peasant boy he was and promising;
For well the peasant's duties he could do,
And sad he felt when anything calamitous
Befell his home—blasts blowing o'er the fields,
Blighting his father's crops—murrain his cattle.
An ardent thirst for learning made him choose
The path of study. A student he became;
And nought could satisfy his thirst for lore.

Height after height he gained in scholarship,
And higher still he looked, and still he gave
The fruit of industry for lore increased.
From boyhood burned the flame of virtue
Deep in his breast. It was his soul's desire
To do well, and reap honour's rich rewards.
Learning refined his taste—absence, his love
For his dear home—adversity whetted
His nature generous—and for a world,
The sensitive and poor he'd injure not,
But in his sympathetic heart feel for
The brotherhood of man; he could not see
The beggar but he pitied him—nor hear
The slanderous remark, but gave him pain—
And for each crime he palliation found.
Oh! what a rapturous glow of feeling
Moved his breast, when he loved virtuous woman,
Enjoyed or fancied fair and virtuous scene!
Projects innumerable, of doing good
At home—abroad, passed through his noble mind;
Ne'er heard he generous sentiment expressed
But touched his heart, and gave him energy to act.
Alas for him, man's desperately vile:
Him, unsuspecting, a Jewish bargainer
Overreached—a beardless Christian Jew.
A very compound-interest-loving Jew,—
He prays each morn, and cheats throughout the day;
'Tis wickedness inherited—he gives
His greedy sons the greed his father left him—
A line hated and hateful—for although

Their miser table, with the earnings of
The poor, paid out in copper coin, and grasped
With greedy hand. A happy family they,
Working to one another's hands in deeds
Of avarice, their industry rewarded
They are so glad! 'Twas the old father knave,
Whose smile was smoother than the London villain's,
Who warped his meshes round the country youth,
Emptied his purse, and left him to his fate.
He whispered kindness first, gave him the bait,
And having won him, stabbed him with his knife.
And yet we did not wish the scoundrel wo,
That night at least; for we waxed joyous.
We lived our youthful days over again—
We took our seats around his father's hearth,
And sung our songs, and cracked our jokes anew.
We clomb the heathery braes, and gaily strayed
Through glens, by beetling craggy cliffs o'erhung,
Viewing their rugged glories in the lake
Sparkling and clear below: we winged again,
Merry, yet cruel boys, the cushat proud,
Or snared in quiet pool, the speckled trout.
We made the towering rocks and crags around
To echo, and resound with Burns's songs—
We read Pope, Milton, Shakspear, Thomson, Swift,
Ran o'er the pages of sweet Catulus,
Read Virgil, and magnific Homer too.
We talked of mothers, uncles, aunts, and sires,
Of old grandmothers too, and grandfathers,
Of cousins, second cousins, aye and third,—

We talked of college days, and college chums,
We gave hard hits at some poor drivelling wights,—
Conceited pedants, altogether vain,
And altogether brainless; but we praised
Many, praised them with all our heart and soul.
The members of our grand debating club,
Stood full before us, yet alas not all.
Poor Morton! though he looked as blooming, gay,
And cheerful as the rest, had long we knew,
Slept underneath the turf.—Heroic youth!
Who, when the Asiatic pestilence
Hovered, on foul wings, o'er our villages,
Hamlets, and cities, strove to save the poor
From his dread talons; but in the effort fell,—
Himself death-smitten by the abhorred disease.
We summoned Stirling from his father's cot,
His dear beloved home,—Stirling, who sang
The lass of Irvine water, in the days
Of other years; he quite delighted us,
Though scarce so fluent in quotation chaste,
From Burns and Shakspear as some eight years since—
For life's realities have sobered down
The passion-breathings of his generous soul.
From Loudon's bonny banks and flowery lea
We brought Hugh Brown, and helped him to a chair.
He gave us scanty news; he mostly praised
The wood-encircled village, o'er whose lawns
He loves, as in life's morn, to ramble yet.
With some reluctance, yet at our request,
In his own manly tones he read a few

Most beauteous extracts, from his own fine poem,
“ The Covenanters.” Would he give himself
Up to the muse entirely—would he come
And write poetic sketches here in town,
How might he everlasting laurels reap,
And charm his country, and delight mankind!
We summoned Wilson from Lochfield, and hark!
“ With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound,”
The door flies back ; and in with measured step,
And stately rustic tread, the man of worth
Advancing, gives us both a rough hand shake,
And takes a seat: not over fluent, true,
In utterance or expression is friend John!
But quite a giant in intelligence
And strength of thought. We summoned virtuous
Ross,

Religious Ross, from Glasgow city fair,
Where, for his friends, amidst the city throngs
He keeps an open table, all the year.
From Frith of Clyde we summoned Sandy Jack,
And with some small reluctance he did leave
His own delightful home: for Scotland scarce
Can furnish a more brilliant scene, than meets
Each day his raptured eye—for his is quite
The poet’s fancy, and the poet’s soul.
From Canada, where, midst primeval woods,
He, in his cabin school-house, trains the youth
To learning, and to virtue, came Rentoul
Across the Atlantic waters,—easy man,
And not without his share of caustic wit;

Deep read in history, I need not say,
His converse more than pleased; it charmed us all.
But hark! St Paul's rings out the hour of twelve.
The charm was broken; yet we parted, glad
That we had met, and wished each other joy.
London, whilst traversing thy narrowest
And filthiest streets and lanes, I feel as if
A breeze most fragrant blew! The zephyr sweet,
That on its light wings wafts the scent of flowers
On summer's eve, yields not one half the joy,
That steals across the soul, when virtue flings
Her influence o'er us where we least expect
To find her; yet the case is such, I'm sure,
When in some dirty close we hear the sound
Of hymns, or prayers, or preacher's manly voice
Instructing young and old, from God's blessed book.
Yes! often do we find a poor indeed
But pious family, blooming amidst
Such dismal moral wastes, like those sweet flowers,
The eastern lilies, peering through rough thorns.
See in St Giles's lane a mother glad
Fondling her babe, or causing yon thin girl,
And pretty pale-faced boy, to con their tasks.
'Tis a converted family, reclaimed
From misery and vice, by one small tract
Left by a Sunday teacher, on the text,
" Believe in Jesus Christ and thou'l be saved."
Or in another horrid filthy lane,
Behold a sympathizing circle met
To mingle tears, and smiles, and joys, and hopes.

These all are Christians, though they live, or seem
To live, in the vestibule of hell!

These are the blessed fruits of Sunday schools,

Tract-circulation, missionary zeal.—

Behold yon Hospital, projecting free,

The Asylum, and the other Charities,

Where deaf and dumb, infirm and lunatic,

Diseased, sick, and what is worse than sick,—

Vicious, are all admitted, and seen to.

What is yon stately building standing out

Pre-eminent? Reader, it is a school,

Reared by a rich donor: let us hope the best—

It was not vanity perchance, but real

Benevolence, or say religion, which

Induced the man to place his wealth immense

I' the public funds to make the building rise,

And flourish. Yet, whate'er the cause might be,

It has done, and it still is doing good—

For see in goodly numbers well attired,

In clothing picturesque, the scholars out,

Sporting on the pleasure ground: surely these

Are London's noblest sights. She has grand kirks!

(In England though they all are churches called,

I mean those buildings which the state endows.)

Reared huge on pillars tall, and crowned with domes,

And spires piercing the clouds—all hail, St Paul's!

Huge as a highland mountain; on thy back

Stupendous, bearing statues, domes, and spires.

(Burder, in's village sermons, says, the ark

Immense of Noah was about the size).

Old, rugged, matchless edifice! throwing
Thy venerable shadow o'er a scene
Of commerce, and of bustle; but all times
Rendered illustrious, by thy form august.
Ha! I behold thee frowning, grim, and bold,—
Thy gilded spire high blazing in the sun;
A murky cloud shrouding thine awful dome;
Within whose grand spacious interior
The organ's sublimating notes are now
Pealing like thunder: heroes, poets, stand
Around, sculptured by genius, showing aye
The glory of the chisel—thou art big,
“Burly and big,” St Paul's, like Cowper's priest
Who first invented chairs with elbows twain.
Stately and vast thou art—but art thou good
For anything, save by thy size immense,
And costly architecture, to excite
Surprise? Yes! prayers are read in thee,
And sermons too, they tell us; yet I fear
Thou'rt grander than thou'rt good, famous St Paul's!
Chapels plain, unpretending, have been reared
In London's every street; they have no spires,
No organs, (Surrey chapel though has one;
But Surrey chapel is of mongrel breed).
Yet though they want these, they have ministers
Who, or I much mistake, do good to souls—
Preaching sound doctrine, and most faithfully
Dealing with the heart; so do mine, thou sayest,
Huge, lumbering building! do they?—Fare thee well.
Flinging its gothic grandeur far around,

And filling us with wonderment, and awe.
Behold Westminster next!—in its vast halls,
Recorded too in marble statues stand
The men of rank and genius, bringing fame
To the sculptor. Milton and Shakspear there
Stand out pre-eminent—were the church's pride,
Her boast, her glory, architecture fine—
Here she would be unrivalled, but 'tis not.
No! in some far remote and rural scene,
When from the east, the west, the north, the south,
You see her members on a sabbath morn,
Winding along to Zion's holy hill,
Although the place they meet in to praise God
Be e'er so mean—a barn, or fishing shed,
Or whatsoe'er you choose,—if there the God
Who heaven and earth surveys, send down his grace,
And give his gracious presence; this by far
Excelleth all the pride and pomp of show.
London! on sabbath days thy chapels ring
With heavenly eloquence; but, Reader kind,—
If thou'rt religious too, in flowery May
Visit the city whereof now I sing,—
London, I mean, the great metropolis
Of Europe,—go to Exeter's vast hall—
Hark! hark! in words all fervour Williams pleads,
Most eloquently pleads, the cause of Christ.
He speaks of lovely islands, that emboss
The broad and far Pacific! Medhurst see
Has risen, pleading the cause of half the world,
The cause of China! Moffat, Scotchman bold,

And hardy as his native hills, in words
Of power, sometimes of thunder, cries aloud
For pity to rude Africa! the crowd
Immense collected in these vasty halls
Are to the heart's core thrilled; for heathen deeds,
And heathen darkness, are described; and tales
Are told of horrid cruelty; are told in tones
Majestic, piercing, deep, and oft sublime.
The ardent youth burn with desire to go
And save the heathen; the vast multitude
Only resolve forthwith to equip a fleet,
A vast grand fleet, and send abroad a host
Of missionaries, to evangelize the globe.
Alas! these meetings end; and much I fear,
Though good is done, such feelings soon dissolve,
Like the morning cloud or drops of early dew.
Tell me, delighted reader, whither now
Shall I conduct thee? to the senate house,
The house of Lords, and Commons? Yes! I shall,—
Not on a common night, but when some grand
Debate has been announced! Squeeze in, Squeeze in
There's room for two yet! do not crush your hat,
But hold it up!—Bob Peel is on his legs,—
Attempting much as may be to appear
Something like Cicero, in the olden times,
Or Pitt, or Canning, in more recent days.
I grant he has their smoothness—has he too
Their point, their classic energy? perhaps
He has—yet in my feeble judgment,—No!
Lord John gets up—but though his matter's good

He looks most thin, most shrivelled, and most wan,
And squeaks confoundedly from his shrill pipe.
Macaulay next, all eloquence and fire,
Arises and electrifies, and leaves
Impressions deep, not soon to be effaced.
But we'll be jammed to death;—so let us haste
To the other house. Lord Brougham, whose strong
voice

Once shook the house, and made the Norman blood
Of England's proudest peers to freeze and chill,
Is yonder, nodding on a bench. Great man!
He sitteth there majestic, though in ruins,—
A beacon that shall blaze all future years,
Telling that neither genius, learning, wit,
Nor eloquence, can save from public scorn
The man who dares to tamper with the truth.—
My gracious Queen! My dear Victoria!
I need a line or two to finish book
The fourth; so in God's name I bid you hail!
The British people mustered, lovely girl,
To see thee crowned! great was the happiness,
The shouting too was loud; because thou art
Indeed the "Queen of hearts." On that blessed day,
Which gave into these lovely arms of thine,
Thy own dear Albert. We were nearly drunk
With joy, because we knew that thou wast glad;
And not a year ago, how quailed the hearts
Of all thy loyal subjects, when thy life,
Thy precious life, was perilled, and the throne
Of Britain seemed to invite the tyrant's grasp.

It was a breathless hour,—upon it hung
Not thy dear life alone,—not thy babe's life,
But of a mighty empire the weal or wo.
Then, gracious Queen! since God has spared thee,
Since thou hast lived to give the throne an heir,—
Since thou, the beauteous mother hast become
Of two as fine babes as the sun shines on,
Sustain thy well-earned fame; shun bad advice;
Let neither Melbournes, Wellingtons, nor Peels,
Seduce thee from thy judgment,—trust thyself,—
Follow the dictates of thy own kind heart,—
Read carefully thy bible,—pray to God,—
And educate thy children in his fear,—
So shalt thou honoured live, and when thou goest
The way of all the earth, thy soul shall wing
Its blessed flight to the land of endless joy!

Thou, royal babe, smiling like other babes,
And looking, just as other children do,
To thy dear mother; yet a princess born!
I wish thee worthy of thy royal birth.
God save thee too, princess Victoria!
Illustrious Boy! born on lord Mayor's day,
I wish thou hadst been christened, that I might,
Before I close, have given thee my all hail,
By thy own proper name—the Newspapers
Are guessing shrewdly at it; some say Ned
After thy grandfather; others William
After thy mother's uncle; some say George;
But heaven forbid! say I; we've had enow
Of Georges—Lovely Boy without a name!

Thou'rt nothing yet but a stout thriving babe,
The picture of thy German grandfather.
Yet may the God by whom kings reign, preserve
Thy most important life, and give thee grace,
To sway in time the sceptre of these realms.

END OF BOOK IV.

BOOK V.

LONDON, what art thou? is it possible
For any single pen to shadow out
Thy varied scenes?—for they are varied sure.
Quick shifting like the heavens, earth, and sea;
And like them endlessly diversified.
I feel some small regret that I have risked
To sing of thee at all. I should have kept
To country sketches, resting satisfied
With “babbling o’green fields,” rivulets, and flowers;
But since I have plunged into the swelling tide,
I’ll muster courage, and most yarely swim
Against the impetuous current; now for it—
I tempt the subject grand! It is my wish,
Imprimis, to describe thy vasty size,
Stupendous city! let us then suppose
Edina, that is Edinburgh, removed
From where she stands at present, and conveyed
By magic, or some other kind of art,
To some magnific plain, and river broad.
Of course, Coat’s Crescent, Princes Street, and all

Her sparkling squares, her ancient Castle high;
Holyrood house; the mighty Calton-hill,
With monuments pertaining; Arthur's seat,
And all things else must come along with her.
Remove also from where she standeth now
Brighton with all her shining mansions gay,
And verdant showy trees, from which they peer,
And plant her by her northern cousin's side,—
Fetch Bath, and Lymington, and Cheltenham,
And set them by their sides in safety down:
These, all united, make a city vast—
That's certain! Well! above them, hang blue skies,
And gorgeous white clouds; bid their citizens,
The gay, the beautiful, the finely dressed,
Go promenade i' the sun, or drive about
In curricles, in coaches, cabs, or cars,
O'er shining pavements, or rich gravel walks!
Could all this splendour, and magnificence,
Vie with St James', the Regent's, or Hyde Park?
Where, let me ask, would be the stately domes?
Or where the crowds of gay nobility,
That occupy those streets of palaces,
Or loll in carriages that ceaseless run
Along these splendid walks, in sunshine gay?
Go, lug up Manchester, and hoary Leeds,
Radical Birmingham, and Glasgow too,
With all their traffic—set them gently down
Beside the others. What, pray, are they worth,
Compared to Cheapside, Cornhill, Leadenhall,
Or the crowded Strand? The ports upon the coast

Placed side by side, to what would they extend,
Compared with London, or St Kathrine's docks,
Or India, East and West,—could they unload
Such lofty piles of goods, or fill along
The banks of Thames, these mighty storehouses?
Collect the churches and cathedrals hoar,
All over Britain; add Yorkminster too,—
Yet great St Paul's, and Westminster, are worth
The whole of them—suppose the Charities—
The Watson's—and the Herriot's hospitals
Of Britain all collected, could these make
The asylums, schools, and hospitals of London?
London, thou art the warehouse of the world!
Its queen besides—yet mighty queen of the earth,
It was not always so—founded by *Brute*,
Thou wast at first merely a fishing-town,
Composed of huts, wherein dwelt savages,
Tattooed, and naked, on the banks of Thames;
O'er which then waved stupendous forest trees,
Covering for hundred miles the country round.
A Roman town was, in the course of years,
Added, 'tis true! to the first founder's village—
But what was London then to London now?

And what was London in king Stephen's days?
Or when the Henrys, Edwards, Richards, reigned,
Compared with London now? True, in those days
They had their tiltings, and their tournaments,—
Castles were reared—the London bridge was built—
Gay weddings were performed—valorous
Defences made—and prisoners of note

Committed to the Tower. There would be then,
As now, upon the river rowing-matches,
And to the fields adjacent, visits paid
On Sundays fine, and other holidays—
Thou then hadst sundry palaces, and eke
Churches besides. Westminster was begun
In ancient times; but not till many a king
Had added to her greatness, did she stand
The queen confessed of gothic edifices.
St Paul's was nothing till Sir Christopher
(I can't endure the paltry name of Wren)
Gave her importance. It is very true,
The Tower is ancient, and we must confess
That even in days of old, thou something wert;
But where in olden times was England's bank,
The India house, the Gallery of Arts,
The Polytechnic Institution?—the
Hundred sights of modern times, which strangers
Visit. Hyde Park, St James', I grant, are old,
But were they always fringed with mansions grand?
Shudder, ye dandy loungers! Regent Park
Was once laid out in fields by country boors,
Farmers yclept. Is it not horrible?
Indeed they tell me all the brilliant streets,
Towards the west of Britain's capital,
In man's remembrance, only green fields were.
I'm told too, that in former times the streets
Were only narrow lanes, with filthy streams
Flowing amid. The pitcher there was dipt.
It is not long since cabs and omnibuses

Began their noisy course through London streets—
Men sought before their dingy homes on foot;
And, wonderful to say! the docks, where ride
So many gallant ships; the storehouses,
Within whose spacious vaults interminable,
Madeira, Port, Sherry, and all good wines
Are treasured up, were quite unknown till late,
And other works of use and ornament,
Many and great, we cannot stop to name,
Are but of yesterday; so now at last,
Great modern London is our pride and boast,
Well worth *our* visiting; nor we alone.—
From Europe's continent, let freckled Swedes,
Dull Dutchmen, swarthy Spaniards, shrivelled
Franks,
And Germans, with long beards, and bushy hair,
Come, and humility and wisdom learn.
I do entreat his Holiness the Pope,
To leave the Vatican, and make sojourn
Four months at least in the metropolis.
Celestial emperor!—permit thy slave
To kiss thy shoe tie, and on bended knee,
Humbly, most humbly, to entreat a visit!
'Twill save some throat-cutting, celestial king!
For I'll be sworn did you behold the might,
The strength, the wealth of London; you'd return
Back to Pekin, and come to present terms.
I have clomb already to St Paul's high top,
I'd fain ascend a second time, and have
London below filling the horizon.

But let me rather to Westminster bridge—
The parliament new houses, right below,
Rise fast, and elegant,—list to the clink
Of mason's hammer—see the tackle raise
The massy stone, while up the river smooth
The boats are plying gaily: steamers too,
Crowded with Londoners shoot through the arch
To Richmond, while, below the graceful bridge,
The Thames is strewed with smallcraft, barges, boats,
And on the banks on either side, arise
Storehouses, wharfs, like rocks irregular,
And taverns vast with painted sign-posts too.
But see the river now from London bridge,
On this same shining day the sixth of June,
One thousand eight hundred and forty-one.
Of architectural pride, what ranges vast
Meet us all round, 'mid which pre-eminent,
Stands out the Custom-house, near it the Tower,
A city in itself, well walled and strong,
And with a ditch defended: near us see
Blazing its burning torch, the Monument,
And lo behind! that ever great St Paul's.
The tide of men, waggons, and curricles,
Making for Brighton Railway, or the road
That leads to Dover—hurry o'er the bridge.
On either side, the Greenwich steamers fume,
And snort, as if impatient to be gone.
Crowds there embark, and crowds too land on the
shore.
But see, stretching far down, a shining space

In centre of the river, open, long,
And fringed on all sides with vast press of ships!
Save for the vanes, steamers, and canvas bright,
Glittering to-day in sunshine brilliantly,
These masts would seem a forest of north pines,
Stripped by the wintry frost of all their leaves.
Crowded with gay and dashing citizens,
Still on this open space the steamers play;
While fast the ferryboat amid them skims.
Changing, yet changeless; 'tis a splendid scene!
How oft delighted have I sailed adown
That noble stream, borne on its bosom broad,
Hurrying like lightning on, through barges, boats,
Ships, schooners, sloops, and craft of every sort!
On either side, upon its banks I mark
Taverns, black workshops, dry docks, and coal wharfs,
Till moving on, I hail the mansions bright
Of Greenwich, and Woolwich, peering from trees
Verdant and tall, as on we sailed,—have marked
Gardens, green meadows, and broad pasture fields.
What sails, and steamers too, are meeting us!
Swift speeds the stately "London" from Dundee,
Meeting the tide with power all-conquering;
And see the "Adelaide" from Leith, the "Star"
From Inverness,—from Aberdeen the "Queen,"
And from Calcutta comes up the "Hindostan;"
"Alfred," from Sydney, with her broad bright flag
Steers proudly up, and the majestic "Prince"
From Hobart Town moves onward brilliantly.
See too, the fair "Matilda," from Bourdeaux,

Pursues with arrowy speed her onward path!
But who the numerous sail shall count, or name,
That stud the expanded bosom of the Thames?
Yet, Thames, it was not always so—of yore
Seven noble bridges did not span, with arch
Majestic, that most brilliant stream of thine.
(Thy only boast was then the London bridge.)
Not always didst thou bear such tiers of ships
Extended like a forest—steamers gay
Not always snorted on thy swelling breast,
Bearing the laughing crowds against the stream
To Richmond, or adown to Greenwich park—
Such multitude of ships as now, followed
Never before thy course winding and broad—
Yet 'tis not yesterday that Indian ships,
In gorgeous sail, have o'er thy bosom glid—
Or noble men-of-war, built on thy banks,
Been launched into thy wave. In days of old,
To London market thou wast the highway;
For then the sturdy Kentish gardeners
Embarked upon the waters pure and bright,
Driving on early morn their vegetables,
Rich corn, and luscious fruit, to Leadenhall.
Not always did such multitudes of gay
And fashionable view on holidays
The beauties of thy banks, braving the stream up
Or floating down again, smoothly and quick—
Yet many a brilliant freight of brave and gay
Thou oft has freely borne, long time ago,
In pleasure parties on thy bosom broad

Rowing quite cheerily. In those days the court,
Princes, and queens, and dukes, and belted knights,
Pages, and squires, hawksmen, and ladies' maids,
Oft sought a day of pleasure on thy waves.
Excursion quite heroic, wonderful,
From Westminster to the Tower and back again!
Such sights, alas! are seldom witnessed now—
Full oft the victim too of despotism,
Well guarded, was conveyed upon thy wave
At midnight's dismal, sullen, ominous hour,
To the damp dreary dungeons of the Tower.
A noble highway, Thames, grandest on earth!
What songs of watermen, on moonlight eves,
Have not thy crisped waves listened to, as on
They cheerily rowed the pleasure barge, with all
Her streamers floating in the gales of May.
But farewell, father Thames, I should not tire
Of praising thee myself, but I must please
The impatient reader, who begins to frown,
And winks to me, wishing a change of theme.

Come, let us to the crowded streets again!
Crowded indeed—where is the ocean that
Shall swallow up at last such tides of men?
They crowd! they crowd! they hurry on a main!
Not at the bank alone, or Charing-cross;
But in each thoroughfare, London throughout,
Alas, the soundless, sullen, dismal sea
That bounds time from eternity, shall soon
Engulph them all. Although as thick as leaves
Of the vast forest, as old Homer sings,

Autumn shall sere them, and the wintry frost
Shall strew them to the blast. But oh! a truce
To moralizing—'tis nor fitting time,
Nor fitting place, for it—now see to these men,
Each busy seeking his own aim, although
They seem to reel confusedly; all of them
Are guided by some power mysterious—
The pale mechanic to his workshop hastens;
The sturdy labourer seeks his scene of toil;
The merchant hastens to his counting-house,
The dandy barrister his chambers rich,
To execute his orders onward speeds:
The tradesman, on perchance this day to dog
His customers for money; many go
A shopping; the industrious wife to make
Cheap merchandise; ladies of every age,
Old, young, lean, plump, shrivelled, and beautiful,
Hie them to shops to choose them dresses fine,
And to them all the shopkeeper beckons
Most courteously, and sells meantime his wares
At interest good. Cockneys, or those who dwell
At the west end, lug on their country friends
To the resorts, and noble sights of London,
Smiling and using polished talk; but still
Cursing them inly, as unmannered brutes—
The foreigner, from sallow countenance,
And dress fantastic, recognised at once
Wondering and staring, stalks along the streets.
Some emigrating to a distant shore,
Are hastening to the docks, attended by

Huge porters bearing luggage, chests or trunks,
Band-boxes, pormanteaus, and carpet bags.
Some saunter on careless, and loitering,
Heedless of reputation, broken men;
Some have sharp eyes; so be upon your guard,
Though 'tis day-light—they've nimble fingers too,
And seals and golden chains rather invite.
The crowds are poor at once and numerous,
Yet mingled with the rich, titled, and great,
Yet who amid them all noticee secures?
Three only in great London are stared at,
The Queen, Prince Albert, and Duke Wellington,—
'Tis here all meet, as Blair says; from all climes
The men are gathered. Europe's continent
Gives us her quota, burning Africa,
Vast Asia, and the two Americas—
Many are here from distant villages
Of merry England, and cold Seotia too.
(In England though I've suffered more from frost,
Than e'er I did in Scotland, reader, mark
These epithets! though ofttimes misapplied
Yet aid us much in tagging out a line.)
Many are here from Erin's verdant isle
Easily recognised, tall, sinewy, lank,
Thinking of home, and the sweet joys of youth,
Dublin-bay oysters, Tipperary fairs,
O'Connell's rint, or lovely Ireland's wrongs,—
But who is "each of all" this mighty crowd,
The man of rank, where is he? Where the man
Of genius? And oh! where the noble soul,

And where the villain dire? and who of all
This vast assemblage, yet to fame shall rise?
Or rather, may we ask, who is the man
Of honour? 'tis perchance that tawdry wight
That all despise,—his tattered dress denies
Respect; brings him scowls from the haughty crowd;
It is perhaps that wretched care-worn woman,
Nigh broken-hearted, struggling with her wo.
So after all I have said, and all I have sung
Of these vast crowds, I nothing know but this;
That almost all have an aim,—'tis the love
Of virtue, honour, money, pleasure, fame,
Moves the whole mass; many I doubt, are ravens;
For though one brotherhood, the stranger poor
Is oftentimes left to die amidst the vast
Abundance, and the crowds of men they call
Benevolent. Yes! yes! benevolent.
London who can describe thy good, thy ill,
Thy sudden bankruptcies, and thwarted schemes,
Thy hasty rises, and thy hasty falls,
Thy hungering masses, and thy overgorged,
Thy smiling faces, and thy broken hearts,
Thy geniuses, thy idiots, and thy knaves,
Thy chapels holy, and thy brothels vile,
Thy paupers dying for want of nourishment;
And from repletion dropping down i' the streets
The apoplectic alderman; London,
Thou grand production of man's genius,
A world within thyself, a mighty page
Of history, recording grandest deeds,

And foulest too, and meanest, thou a vast,
Vast compound art of all that's great and small,
Benevolent and bloody, good and bad,
A circle in whose centre all lines meet—
An ocean, where all rivers blend and boil—
A huge mass, where all atoms coalesce—
A focus, where all fires unite and burn—
A theatre, whose stage all actors fill.—
But leave the public street, and let us seek
The Railway terminus, Brighton, or Bath—
Behold that monster vast who snorts and fumes
From his proboscis; that Leviathan
Who shakes his mighty mane! stubborn he seems,
Storming in wrath, and proud and scornful,
Yet under charioteer's abeyance,—off
At once he starts in fury on his path,
Speeding like lightning with his mighty train.
Steam-engine, grand invention of James Watt!
What mighty revolutions have been, are,
And shall be, by thy influence achieved!
By thy gigantic power, the Londoner,
If not too lazy, may within the space
Of thirty hours see Caledonia's hills!
Inhale her breezes, and reap happiness
By reaping health: for they are nearly one.
When Railways intersect the British isles,
New cities shall arise, new market towns,
And smiling villas, cottages, and domes,
Gardens, and pleasant fields, shall spread around.
The cultivated fields shall then supplant

The barren waste, and Scotia's peasantry
Shall, when they list, visit great London town,
And home return, instructed and improved.
Steam-engine, grand invention of James Watt!
Rapid, throughout the world thou bearest the news
And all the fruits of art and science too!
Steam-engine, grand invention of James Watt!
Thou noble helpmate of the British Press!
Powerful so long, for ever showering down
Gigantic truth, gigantic falsehood too,
Sense, nonsense, ribaldry, religion, fudge,
Music, song, portraits, pictures, 'mongst mankind;
Helping the slanderer, tyrant, liar, Jew;
Aiding the patriot, saint, philanthropist;
Imparting happiness almost divine.—
Producing worse than hellish misery,
Serving the cause of God, religion, truth,
Depraving moral feeling, aiding sin,
Teaching that child how best to filch a purse;
Instructing that one how to praise and pray;
Yet under thy dread influence, truth shall yet
Prevail; true knowledge, true religion spread,
Till light celestial cover the whole earth.—
Oh! London! wondering I have dwelt within
Thy stately domes, and walked thy crowded streets,—
I came to thee a wonderer, and I leave,
Wondering as much as ever; then farewell!
I ne'er shall look upon thy like again.

END OF BOOK V.

BOOK VI.

BRITAIN, what art thou! by the wild waves tossed,
An island of the sea! yet noble isle!
Conscious that thou art Ocean's sceptred queen.
In chalky peaks thou lookest upon the south,
Scornful and proud; for these tall cliffs of thine
Have not alone the stormy billows mocked;
But oftentimes foreign navies 'gainst thee armed,—
Thy stronger northern rocks, towering and dark,
Look down in pride on the Atlantic vast,
Which spends in vain upon their stubborn bays
The strength and fury of its foamy waves.
Thousands of ships, magnific island! steer
Towards thy numerous ports their gallant course,
In brilliant sail; thy firths and rivers broad
Bear many a gallant navy—the glad sun
Gilds many a sail of solitary ship,
Gay o'er thy channels steering—basking in
The gay and placid deep that circles thee.
How gorgeous, and how grand the scene, to him
Who, from the summit of some towering peak,

On sunny summer's day, looks down upon
A thousand sail, cruising along the shores!
While, o'er their masts and streamers, brilliant gulls
Flap their glad wings, and scream their notes of joy—
And Britain! thou hast noble mountains! some
Are green to the top; others are grey and bald;
Piled up unshapely, huge, and towering high
In the blue heavens,—nor are thy northern hills
All, all, a barren waste; serving alone
To yield a soul enrapturing prospect—No!
For there are green hill sides cropped by the sheep,
And at their base, green fields of verdure stretch
In pasture rich, and also rich in corn—
In glassy lake their beauty mirrored oft.
Such are thy northern hills; but farther-south,
Broad and bright rivers wash the verdant base
Of thy green hills; throwing their shadow vast
O'er vales where many a noble mansion rears
Its stately column to the clear blue skies.

Oh! I could sing thy streams, land of my birth!
For they are all so pure, purling, and bright—
Thy gurgling rill, just gathering in the moors,
And kissing rushes, willows, by the holms
Where lambs and sheep are feeding.—I could sing
Of verdant braes, of breckans, and grey rocks,
Perchance of playful lamb, or bullock young,
Now shadowed deep upon its placid pool,
Or in the deep ravine enclosed, o'erhung
With hazel bushes, and some lofty firs,
Or rocks deep frowning, hide its rocky bed,

Through which the troubled stream now seeks its way
Unseen; now re-appearing, glitterest
In the sun or moonlight. In the still eve
You hear the cooing of the dove, the scream
Of the lone howlet, or the stir of leaves,
As the adventurous school-boy scales the fir
To rob the cushat's nest; or let us to
The deep ravine, where hazel bushes bloom,
And where the stream dashes its tresses bright
O'er the dark rocks; descending far adown;
And in the shade, and labyrinth of leaves,
Losing itself at last—should I select,
Scotia, from out thy thousand streamlets, one
To be my favourite,—it sure would be
The Gala water, loveliest of streams,
Winding amid green vales,—on either side,
Hills verdant rise, some gently sloping, some
Abrupt, on all of them bright sheep feeding,
Farm houses interspersed, mansions and cots,
And woods the passing traveller's delight;
And the stream itself still flowing placid, pure—
Who can describe my rapture or its charms?

Now, Britain, shall I take thy rivers broad,
Formation splendid of thy numerous streams,
Whether from moor springing, or glittering lakes,
The rapid Spey, nurtured amid the storms,
And mountains holding them,—companions meet—
Yet winding, showing thy gigantic form,
In Granton's open vale—a scene, ah! how
Magnificent! or from the splendid haughs

Of Cromdale seen, or top of famed Cairngorum.
But, Dee, what poet can in proper verse
Describe thy beauty, as thou flowest on
Washing the classic base of famed Braemar,—
Whose rugged sides immortal Byron scaled
While yet a boy! Ballater, Banchory,
And many other nameless villages,
Hamlets, and towering mountains and level plains,
Thou on thy way rejoicing visitest,
Until thy waters fling themselves abroad
Into the placid sea at Aberdeen.
Gay city of the north! science and art
Have been embarked to render thee complete,
A peerless town; yet 'tis thy least of praise,
That sparkling granite has been used to form
Thy churches, streets, and squares. Gigantic Tay,
King of our British streams, born of the lake
That gives thee thy illustrious name. Trace it,
Ye travellers, who admire the wild and grand!
See it 'mid fertile fields, winding along—
Trace it from famed Kenmore, to where it meets
The Tummel, and from thence unto Dunkeld—
Ye who admire the noble spectacle,
Of a majestic river winding on,
Houses and mansions, trees and rocks, and hills
Bright mirrored on its bosom, to Dunkeld
Repair, stand on her old massy arched bridge,
And view a scene matchless and unsurpassed,—
But trace it now from noble Grampians here,
Across the famed Strathmore, to lovely Perth,

Then see it from the summit of Kinnoul,
Winding so lovely at your feet, and Perth
Upon its banks, and thence a glassy lake
By Gowrie's level, lovely, verdant carse;
Haste! meet yon steamer plying to Dundee.

Now comes the Forth, famed for its windings grand,
And flowing ever 'mid the fertile fields—
Trace, if you please, its noble course throughout,
Be sure to stand on Stirling castle high,
And see Benlomond, at whose base it takes
Its origin, and nearer see the grand
Benledi, and Benlawers, Benvoirlich too,
Seeming to cast their shadows o'er thy vale,—
And, look below, right at your feet! and then
Behold the famous windings of the Forth.

Do not stand long; go take a steamer; sail
For fair Edina—then you steer a course
Winding and clear, 'mid corn-fields, and 'mid woods,
Where you may speak to peasant as he reaps
His yellow crop; bidding "God speed" and bless him.

For many a weary mile the infant Clyde
Windeth amid the hills, and peaceful vales,
Till from the accession of a hundred rills,
Collecting size and volume, he, at last,
In majesty, and strength, washes the base
Of towering Tinto: then in furious might
He leaps in waterfalls, roaring o'er vast
And shaggy precipices, heard afar.

A narrow path he after seeks; deep, deep,
And quite fantastic,—'mid the rocks, and woods.

Appearing thence, he flows 'tween braes planted
With orchard trees, and vales of corn; then bears
The brilliant ship upon his glassy breast.
Delightful Tweed! classic and beautiful,
Rising amid the mountains of the west,
Washing old Melrose, Dryburgh, Abbotsford,
And rolling on, until in broadest vale
It flows and forms the ancient border line—
Climb, traveller! climb the lofty Eildon hill—
Behold a noble scene! ten thousand hills,
Grassy and green, rise on the enraptured eye,
And all the cultivated plains of Berwickshire,—
Of Scotia's lovely counties loveliest far.

I love not English streams; for, though they run
Amidst the fertile fields, yet they are born
Not of the moor or mountain—Oh they ne'er
Have kissed the rushes, and the willows green,
Or leapt adown the rock, and wrought a grand
Fantastic path, from out its rugged sides.
No hazel bush, or rock, or lofty fir,
Did e'er o'ershadow them. Oh they are streams
Quite unpoetic! neither pure nor clear.

I love thy cots not less than thy dear streams,
My native land!—The English cot I love,
Though built of brick, and tiles roofing it in,
Its floor of polished brick, and sanded white;
Its porch with shrubs and dazzling flowers o'erhung,
The honeysuckle, and the woodbine chief,
Embracing it,—parterres and groundplots, where
The vegetables grow, from which it gains

The name of kitchengarden. Then the cot
Built by refinement has its beauties too,—
A choice spot is selected for the site—
O'erhanging woods, and splendid pleasure fields,
High rocks, and sparkling lakes, and purling brooks ;
The dome, though called a cottage, yet is framed
Of polished architecture, gravel walks,
And garden, well adorned: this is the sweet
And lovely domicile of some rich wight
Whom fortune prospered; for he came to town
I don't say penniless, for he contrived
By vast economy to keep within
His waistcoat pocket, for his first night's fare;
The great and dazzling sum of eighteen-pence.
But Scotia's peasants' cots I dearly love,
Rude though they be, and wanting ornament!
Their lowly roofs, with rushes of the moor
Thatched; flowers and shrubs we do not meet, yet in
The yard behind, there lacks not goodly store
Of vegetables, rising rank and thick—
And in the adjacent fields, the cow and horse
Feed leisurely; and see the bear and corn
Are waving yellow round the abode of peace!
Even in the moorland waste, unsheltered, cold—
A peaceful happy family oft resides,
Culturing the fields. Such cottages are rife
All Scotland over; from the farthest south
To the north Highlands, and the Orkney isles,
Or far Hebrides, frowning o'er the main.
But most I love the shepherd's cot beside

The brook, amid the wastes, and hills, and moors,—
No culture here, except a narrow plot—
The kitchen-garden, or perchance a hedge,
Stunted and poor, on which you may perceive
The shepherd's rosy daughters spreading clothes.—
In strict defiance of all rule, the walls
Ascend, and if you enter, you shall find
The floor unlevel—if you stand without,
And merely gaze, save for the curling smoke
Ascending from the roof, you scarcely could
Detect it from yon knoll, that rises near.
Yet here within, the shepherd and his wife
Live happily. Lo! see a healthy race
Of children, with the dogs upon the hearth
Behind a blazing fire reclining glad,—
His peaceful flock collected on the heath
At last the shepherd, to his home returns,—
Wife, children, dogs, start up to welcome him.
They soon retire, their frugal supper o'er,
To calm repose, hearing no sound except
The bleating of the lamb, or tinkling noise
Of neighbouring rivulet, scarcely heard by day,
Or heathfowl screaming out his closing notes.—

Or let me sing the farmer's happy dome;
A mansion elegant, and gaily set,
Amid the cultured lawns; and peering out
From poplars tall, or from the spiry fir.
The stable, and the barnyard, and the sheds
Where lodge the live stock, horses, cows, and sheep,
Are in the back ground thrown: the ploughman too

In distance lives; shepherd, and farmer's man.
The spring arrives! the gladsome ploughing time,
And then his pairs in goodly measure walk,
With step powerful and firm, backwards and fore,
Ploughing the fallow ground, or shutting in
The scattered April seed, with harrow rough—
The harvest comes! the grand ingathering time!
Then crowded bands are striving o'er the fields,
To gain the reaper's palm, at least upon
The latest harvest day,—all powers are tasked
Renown to gain by grasping the last ears.
And now 'tis leading time—the carts are out,
Returning loaded with the yellow grain.
In the barnyard, huge stacks arise; and, see
The master riding out, directing all!
The stormy winter comes—the farmer's hall
Has then peculiar charms: the servants crowd
Around the blazing heat; and when the night
Gathers around, they still, although we hear
Much of the march of modern intellect,
Delight in tales of fairies, goblins, ghosts.

Delightful rural life! whether across
The happy plains and meads where cattle graze,
In merry England, or in Scotia's vales,
Where the bold peasant has his home by banks
Of classic Ayr, or Gowrie's Carse renowned,
Ancient Strathmore, or beauteous winding Forth,—
Grander upon the Tweed; and over all
The Lothian range. Farmers! God speed you all,
Grant you a good return, and chiefly ye

Who cultivate old Scotland's moors and wastes,
Capping the hills with firs sheltering the wilds!
Oh may your labours yield you recompense!
But see yon mansion reared by profits gained
In merchandise, or yon reared by the wight
Returned from scorching India with a load
Of gold, his heart and liver damaged much.
Such rear their shining mansions by the brink
Of winding river, or behind the hill
Green and fantastic, or perchance upon
The clear lake's margin. Such abodes are seen—
A few upon the Clyde,—many on Thames.
But if no great proficient in the craft
(Critics say so at least,) sublime of verse,
I scarce can sing of shepherd's lowly cot,
Sweet hawthorn hedge, or rosy buxom lass—
How shall I dare, adventurous, to describe,
My native land, thy stately palaces,
The abode of princes, dukes, and ancient earls!
Yet these abound in thee, go where we may,—
Walk we, or sail, or ride we o'er the length
And breadth of Britain, castles old, and halls
Of modern style, meet us at every turn,
Rearing their turrets o'er the circling woods,
Or in the lake their proud size mirroring.
Yet, Britain, seriously! of all thy sights
I most admire thy antique sculptured ruins,
The camps of Danes and Picts, rugged I grant,—
Yet interesting much to him whose soul
Kindles at tales of other years, and looks

With joy intense, upon these specimens
Of ancient art, genius, and industry.
Of polished Rome the ancient camps and roads
Seen to this day, are testimonials sure,
That long ago her sons o'errun our land.
The Druid temples were a few large stones
In circles set, unpolished, and unroofed!
These were the abodes in which they worshipped God,
Their Woden, and their Thor, in leafy groves.
And thou hast massy castles of defence—
Græme's dyke, erected in the days of old,
To stem the fury of impetuous Rome.
In later times, the border plunderer
Did much annoy thee, and thy Norham, Hume,
And Roxburgh castles, stand as monuments
At once of thy resistance, and thy wrongs,—
And on thy noble coasts, a grand array
Of ruined castles frown on the wild deep,
O'er which they throw their shadows—Dunottar,
Rosyth, Bamborough, and the shaggy Bass,—
Or in the west, Dumbarton, and Dunstaffnage;—
And, speaking of thy ancient castles, I
Were much indeed to blame, did I neglect
To name Lochleven, where that specimen
Of fair humanity, Maria reg.
Lay many a tedious month,—sweet murderer!
Whose broken reputation Glassford Bell
Has in these last of days essayed to mend.
These places of defence alike proclaim
Deeds brave and cruel, captives kept in chains,

And fierce assailants slaughtered in the breach!
Thy old cathedrals, Caledonia,
Are nearly all in ruins!—do I blame
The stern reformer Knox, of memory famed?
No! I admire his policy and tact—
“ Pull down the rooks’ nest, and prevent return!”
Yet visit Roslin, Elgin, or Arbroath,
Melrose, or Dryburgh, and behold most rare
And dazzling specimens of ancient art!
These were the sacred temples of our sires
Where prayers and penances were oft performed—
Where royal brows and ducal, from the fount
Were sprinkled,—infant Christians Christianized.

And many a smiling village, by the side
Of brooks, and streams, and woods, Scotia, is thine!
Hark! 'tis the chime of bells from yonder spire
Rings out the hour of eight. A summons heard
With pain and pleasure by the urchin band,
Who leave for early supper their gay sports.

The men who dwell in towns—nothing admire—
At least they stare at nothing: but the men
Who dwell in villages, stare out their eyes,
At every passing object,—caravans
Conveying Punch and Judy, or wild beasts,
Tigers and lions, monsters from the south,
Women and men composed of wax, attract
Their clownish notice, and elicit praise.
Weddings are much admired; the village race,
Too, has its charms: but the superb display
Of military glory, plumes and caps,

Sashes and bayonets, and glittering guns,
Of marching regiment draws whole houses out.
I know no finer sights, Scotia, amid
Thy varied scenes, than sallow artisan
Digging on summer eve, his narrow plot
Of household ground, for thrift at once, and health;
Extracting weeds from long square onion beds,
Hoeing potatoes, or transplanting greens.
The conversation of these villagers takes
Often times a turn political.
Most serious errors of a doctrinal kind
Are in last Sabbath sermon often found.
The athletic youths, meantime, not heeding much
The theologic or politic talk,
Exercise sports, quoit throwing, or perchance
Heaving the ball, or hurling the huge stone.
Had not resplendent Burns described long since
The endearing interviews which rural lads
With rural lasses hold, I here should paint
Meetings romantic, by some trysting tree,
Or underneath the fragrant hawthorn shade.

The rural villages, where labourers live,
Employed in culture of the soil—the whole
Happy and healthy family employed
In rustic labour, are my chief delight.
The Scottish farmer, with discernment keen,
Selects his man, a thresher stanch and true;
Or sturdy ploughman, bold, industrious, firm—
Such he distinguishes; allows their modes
Of speaking and of acting quite their own.

On Hansel Mondays, Christmas festivals,
Some harvest-home, or merry-making glad,
These are distinguished men; nor they alone;
Their wives and children gain due notice too.

The fishing village, by the shining sea,
Has oft delighted me—the fishermen—
How glad they look, when sitting in sunshine,
Mending their nets, or dressing fishing-hooks;
While in the neighbouring towns the rosy wives
Are bawling fish with basket slung behind,
Its leather belt strapped tight across the brow.
Of all things underneath the blessed sun
A manufacturing village is my hate,
The inhabitants are all so deuced wise,
From morn till eve gabbling of politics.
Yet from this general censure, let me save
The villages and towns of Irvine vale;
Though not so prosperous, or happy now,
As in the glorious year of ninety-six,
When Pitt's romantic wars gave impetus
To commerce and to trade—statesman divine,
Who tipsified John Bull, making him call
While in his cups for sundry luxuries
Not needed, and which now, when sober grown,
He grumbles at, not having cash to pay.

I should not like to draw too much upon
Thy patience, gentle reader of these lines,
Which, whether poetry or prose run mad,
My kindly critics scarce have settled yet,—
Else would I sing of Britain's cities grand,

Of beautiful Newcastle, Liverpool,
Bristol, and Birmingham, and ancient Leeds;
Thy inland towns upon the fertile plains,
The boroughs disfranchised, and country towns,
Thy splendid shipping ports, by placid seas,—
Where thy inhabitants practise all arts,
All sciences, displaying everything
That's elegant, and gay; when like a hive
Of murmuring bees, the dense and bustling crowds
Toil, reason, talk religion, eat and drink,
Smoke, sing, or visit church to praise and pray.

A scene for weeping is the battle field
Rather than joy! yet still these very fields
Where fierce armed savages, in times of old,
Encountered, cutting each his fellow's throat,
Are titled great; I don't object, and if
It be so, then I hail thee, Britain, land
Of battle fields! for, go where'er I choose,
Thy boastful people point me to some spot,
Illustrious rendered by the crimson blood
Which soaked in days of old its peaceful soil.
Yet, Britain! thou hast scenes nobler by much
Than battle fields,—the birth spots of the great.
The hamlets still survive where Adam Smith,
Burns, and immortal Shakspeare, first inhaled
Their native breath: thou hast thy Henry too,
Most exquisite divine! whose dwelling place,
And antique pulpit, still are pointed out.
The cottage, where the Erskines, Ralph and Eben
Were born, are shown too; and the lowly hut

Near Abernethy, where illustrious Brown,
Who wrote the famous Bible Dictionary,
And Bible, Self-interpreting, with Notes,
First saw the light, is, if I do not err,
Still to the traveller exhibited.

Famed Watt was born at Greenock, Henry Bell,
At Helensburgh; and what would London be,
Save for the streets where Milton, Bacon, Locke,
Were born! Tweed, boast thy Thomson! Northern
Dee,

Rejoice! for Ferguson, (illustrious name!)
Was born and nurtured on thy flowery banks.
Nor can we, Britain, count the monuments
Raised to thy geniuses, under St Paul's
Magnific dome; and in Westminster halls—
Indeed, across the country, from the Land's
End to the famous house of John-o'-Groat's.
How noble were the men to whom these tall
Towering monuments have in late years
Arisen! the most of them were peasants born;
Nor only peasants born, many of them
Were peasants bred, tending their fathers' flocks
And herds; and many too are villagers.
These grand memorials they well deserve—
Visit them, youth! and learn and imitate.
Without our men of genius, what on earth
Would we have been, nothing, nothing at all.
Had there not been a Shakspeare to delight,
A Spencer, or a Thomson; had there not
Been born a Watt, or some such other name,

What would Britannia have been? alas! nought.
She owes her consequence solely to men
Of parts and genius. Gentle ladies! thank
Brains masculine for almost all your joys—
The charms of music, and the powers of verse.
I love thee at all seasons, Britain Great!
The spring time—the time of buds and leaves
And early flowers—when the pacific plough
Is driven, most leisurely, through ridges vast—
And when, as Thomson says, the sower stalks
Abroad, scattering across the tilled earth his corn-
seed,
Or when, from stall, where they have fed through all
The months of winter, cattle are conveyed
To pasture ground—'tis a new life to me.
I like the summer when the fields are rich
In pasture, cropped by joyous flocks and herds,
When corn waves in the fields, and promises
A good return, waving both rich and rank—
When all the streams in merry sunlight dance,
And all the woods are covered with green leaves,
And all the clouds ridgy and beautiful.
Hang gorgeously in the blue firmament.
Nor do I less the yellow autumn love,
When crowds of merry reapers strive who best
Shall cut the corn down, using oftentimes talk
Not altogether such as holy ears
Would relish; talk censurable—yet such
As the most pious farmer must endure,
Else would these waving fields remain uncropped.

The reeling snow storm gives me exquisite joy,
When seated by the fire, in farmer's hall,
Listening to merry tale, or rustic song.

'Tis easy, Britain! when all things go well,
When trade and commerce flourish, to bestow
Due praise on thee, yet oh! I find it hard
To praise thee now; for all is out of sorts—
A Tory government—Sir Robert Peel
In place and power, and everything deranged!

Britain, I always love thee! yet I most,
As Grahame says, love ye on the Sabbath-day,—
The day when men, children, and women, lift
Their thoughts above to heaven's great sovereign
Lord;

When for a while, by general consent,
All cares, all toils, are banished from the earth.
The creditor ferocious can't annoy
On such a sacred day—the master stern
Dares not frown to-day—the tyrant dare not
Lift up his lash to-day—Sweet day! on thee,
Oh since I was a boy! how much I have
Of peace enjoyed, spite of restrictions stern,
Keeping me within doors, rising to praise
God; and, in our blessed neighbourhood, nought
But peaceful cottages curling their smoke
So blue, or the travellers, o'er the verdant sward
Thronging the path to Zion,—hearing no sound
But just the bleat of lambs,—the lapwing's voice—
Or murmur of the rill. But I have done!

I have not, very likely, Britain, sung
Thy praises as I ought,—but I have done.
My best; and brightest poets can no more.
So closes book the sixth; now for the seventh—
Reader, rejoice with me! it is the last.

END OF BOOK VI.

BOOK VII.

BRITAIN, like ancient Rome, thou at this day
Hast vast dependencies: thy crimson flag
O'er many a conquered land majestic waves.
In India's beautiful, though sultry land,
Prince after prince before the arms of Clive
Successive fell,—throne after throne was cast
To the ground,—crown after crown was stripped
Of its diamonds and gems,—chiefs of strange names,
Most cruel chiefs, Ali Pachas, to wit,
Sultans, Soldans, Tippoos, big Ali-Beys,
Great Ali Khans, and many more beside,
Surrendered to the conqueror proud sharp swords,
Daggers, and scimitars, embossed with pearls,
And having to the boot scabbards of gold,
And spangled silken sashes, blue and red.
Hindoos and Brahmins, with expansive head,
And having quite an apostolic look,
With reverent beards, and large full eyes, are now
Subjected to thy sceptre bright and proud!
Ganges, thou beautiful, though horrid stream,

Adorned with rice fields and cocoa trees,
And swarming with terrific crocodiles,
That feast on sable infants flung into
Thy sacred waves, by mothers soft and kind!—
Thou art great Britain's river, broad and vast.
The Himmalays casting, in Campbell's words,
Their shadows o'er one half the world, are ours.
All India's spices, all her wealth are ours;
And all her cities too, and all her plains.
Forgive me, reader, such minute detail—
Minuteness, as thou knowest well, is my fort.
India in short is ours; justly acquired,—
Justly, yes justly, Britain, as thou knowest!
The islands of the West are also ours;
Set on the shining seas, and rich in rice,
All kinds of fruit, sugar, and spices rare.
The genial climate of South Africa
We boast of; whither Scottish farmers go
To cultivate the soil. Our countrymen
Have gone to colonize the Canadas;
Australia's island grand (or I should say
Continent rather) has somehow become
Great Britain's property; and cities big
Are there, by Englishmen built and adorned.
Upon its hills, mountains, and pasture fields,
Most noble flocks and herds are feeding now,
And many a noble cargo of their wool
Has here been brought and manufactured.
And we have lately, in Victoria's name,
On fair New Zealand hoisted our proud flag,—

An isle lovelier than ours, and full as large.—
Far more salubrious (see the Morning Post
The Advertising column,) in its soil,
More rich; and there already have our men
Of enterprise gone out, planning large towns,
And grumbling at the horrid savages
Not butchered yet, and for good clothing scarce.
Well, England, certainly a blessing 'tis
That fairer fields than yours await us when
We leave our land and emigrants become.
Yet hear me, Britain, I am serious now.
So listen, thou hast conquered many a tribe,
(I say not righteously,) oh no! unjust,
Bloody, and cruel, have thy conquests been!
Oh now be merciful,—employ thy power,
Thy influence, to enlighten and instruct
These noble patriotic savages,
The aborigines of Africa,
New Zealand, and the woody Canadas!
Oh use thy conquered vassals leniently—
Treat them as men, as brothers—there is blood,
Enough of blood already, on thy hands—
Thou knowest it well,—not easy to wash off.
Then don't increase the stain by shedding more!
Thou art a wealthy country, Britain, yes,—
The wealthiest on earth! How hast thou gained
Thy riches?—has it been, say, by fair play?—
Ha! ha! thou answerest not,—dumb as the oak
From which thy gallant navies have been framed.
Thou starest! well, silence implies confession.

I shall not ask thee then to hold thy right
Hand up, and promise to speak out the truth,
The truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth,—
But I shall deem it certain, thou'rt to blame,—
To blame in reference to thy colonies,
Extracting tribute quite exorbitant,—
Forcing to war peaceful and quiet tribes—
Seizing the fruits of industry from them—
Leaving them famine, plague, and bloody wars.
Marauders, pirates, robbers, buccaneers,
Rapacious wolves, hyenas, lions huge,
Sharks from the sea, from jungles tigers fierce,
Are sucking lambs,—are love-sick harmless doves,—
Compared with Britain, cruel, ravenous!

But surely, British men may be of use
Amidst our colonies; for we do boast
Of high civilization, in each art,
And every science of most polished life.
What comfort, and what luxury is not
Our lot? where are there to be found houses as those
Of Britain happy? Where are lovelier fields,
And where is theoretic liberty
So talked of as in Britain?—we don't speak
At present of its practice. Do we not
Boast of our Christian knowledge? Yes, we do!
Our legislators patronize the church,—
Our loveliest Victoria, too, is sworn
To be its nursing mother. This the cause,
Perchance, why queens give out their own dear babes
To nurse; God bless at least Victoria's!

The world's a desert rude and ruinous.
Go, Britain, go throughout thy colonies,
And circulate the Bible, blessed book,
By which we all are taught the path to heaven!
Go, farmers, go to Africa the rude,
And teach the nations how to plough the soil,—
Go, build them cots, and furnish them with arts:—
Go, merchants, free, unfettered, o'er the earth,
And barter with mankind on fair exchange:—
Go, scientific travellers, and explore
The mines of wealth,—extend science's fields:—
Go, philanthropic man; go, and seek out
The ignorant, instruct them: seek the poor
And feed them; bearing them life's comforts good!
O'er all the earth good tidings bear,—go, tell
Mankind the way to live. The splendid fields
Of far Australia, still lie waste, untilled.
Uncultivated tracts of ground immense,
In North America, seem to implore
Civilized men to come and cultivate.
Go then, and palaces and cities rear!
Mild is the climate, more than mild—'tis hot
For four months in the year; and in the eight
Cold months of winter, you can recreate
Yourselves, by skating on Canadian ice,
Or hearing over nights tales of old days,
Recorded by the blaze of pine-tree fires.
In southern climes the soil is very fine;
The shores are beautified with pearly sands,

And coral are the rocks that skirt the coasts.
Such is New Zealand and Australia,
And all the isles that gem the Pacific!
Or visit Africa the rude and fierce,
Where savages, half naked, by the chase
Or fishing canoe earn precarious food;
Living in huts or tents uncomfortable.
Cruel and ignorant besides are they;
Murdering old mothers; drowning infants weak,
Choking hoar fathers, or what still is worse,
Casting them out to famish and to die!
Ye artisans, go, build them cots, I pray!
Ye tailors, go, and make them decent robes,
Ye cordwainers, go, make them boots and shoes—
Ye millers, go, and teach them how to grind—
But chiefly, Christians, do, at my request
Go out, and bear to them the laws of God.
Tell them of mercy, peace, and righteousness,
Through a Redeemer sacrificed for men!
Preach to them fearlessly, until the day
Arrive, of which the ancient prophet sung,
When all the world shall with God's glory shine,
And Jew and Gentile shall see eye to eye,
And face to face. Yet hosts, alas! still bow
The knee to Baal,—India is still enthralled.
Go, reason with her disputatious Brahmins!
And China too is heathen still,—Oh fling
Over her famous wall God's blessed book;
Or high display it, as the angel did,

Who, as John tells us, flew o'er the arched heavens,
Holding in his right hand a mystic book—
Emblem divine, say of the gospel free!

Britain, 'twould grieve me somewhat, wert thou
thrown

Down from thy greatness: yet as I believe
That all things work together for the good
Of God's wide universe, I might be brought
To think it no regret, that thou shouldst fall;
Because thy degradation and disgrace
Might benefit the world, and teach a dread
Lesson to future times,—and yet I should
Feel melancholy somewhat, at thy fall.

I'd "shed some natural tears, but wipe them soon,"
Were my dear Britain forced to sink somewhat
In national status—to come down; that is,
No longer to support her old renown;
For she has been to me a world of joy.
Alas! alas! a world of pain as well—
I'd sorrow most for that dear natal spot,
Where, as I have before, two times or thrice
Hinted or sung plain out, my sire's cot stands.
Yes! these were happy days, when I did play
And leap about, and to my parents run
With every tale of sorrow and of joy.

It should afflict me, rather, were the fields
Where I did plough or dig, or reap or weed,—
Were the sweet home where I enjoyed o' nights
The peasant's laughter, drowsiness and sleep,

After a day's hard toil, to suffer loss;
Or fall a prey to cruel Chartism.
Full many years ago, that sacred spot
I left, yet oft returned, enjoying
Happy welcomes. Oh do not, reader kind,
Call me a child, or mawkish simpleton,
For naming my sire's cottage a dear spot!
Cowper, Britannia, called thee once a stag!
Allow me, then, for once to call thee ship!
Grand vessel! I do fear you must ere long
Shipwreck sustain: the storm is up—the waves
Dash most furiously against thy sides—
Thou reelest and thou staggerest to and fro.
Old, yet majestic vessel! yet 'tis not
The storm I dread; thy timbers yet are sound;
Thy tackle and thy cordage, and thy sails
Are good as ever; but thy helmsmanship—
Thy helmsman—can he steer thee thro' such seas?
Well! time shall try—yet had we better strip,
And preparation make for a lusty swim;
For, see! the breakers are ahead,—and *poor*
Sir Robert looketh somewhat pale i' the face!
But if, Britannia, thou must needs expire;
Give me at least a sad sad farewell shake
Of thy dear hand; and, after thou art gone,
Remembrance of the pressure sweet shall soothe
My grief. I'll dress myself in mourning weeds,—
I'll put on crape and weepers; and I'll move
Mournfully behind thy hearse. Hearse! 'las the day!

Thou'l die a bankrupt, Miss; and thy remains
Shall to the grave descend, at parish cost.
Thy coffin shall be rough unshaven fir,—
Thy pall, three Chartist aprons sewed together,—
Thy bearers, six gunsmiths of Birmingham,—
Feargus O'Connor shall thy sexton be,—
Old Sarum, the renowned, thy burying-place,—
John Taylor shall thy burial service read.
Thy funeral oration can't be done
Till o'er the ocean broad John Frost return.
Then comes the dirge-drinking, Britannia!
That night no need of bonfires,—see! St Paul's
Is in a blaze—her dome has caught the heat,
The Chartist torch has nobly done its work,
And columns of white flame put out the stars!
Westminster blazeth too; and as I gaze,
Carlton palace sendeth up strange fires—
I see the Tower in flames, terrible night!
Black swarthy demons swagger through the streets,
Throat-cutters, robbers, ravishers, and all
Shriekings are heard, and moanings mingled with
Laughter most fiendish;—but I draw a vail
Over the rest. Next day Chartania
Usurps thy place, and in her strumpet hands
Is placed the ancient sceptre, ocean's queen!
All this may be—yet as I said before—
I should not like it half—then do not sink
Britannia!—Live, Oh live, to bless mankind!
Resume thy ancient dignity, put on

Thy panoply, and all may yet be well—
May the great God whose name is Counsellor,
Inspire thy senators with wisdom, give
Light and direction, that thou still mayest hold
Thy old position in the universe,
Or higher still ascend in glory's scale.
For thou hast on thy surface many spots
Sacred to friendship, and why not to love.
I have had much happiness in dear abodes
Of hospitable men—have often gone,
And oft returned, and never but received
Reception kind; chiefly I have enjoyed
Happiness exquisite, in manses neat
And cheerful, scattered over Scotia's plains.
But have I not, from sweethearts, had both pain
And pleasure too; why, gentle reader, smile!
Is't not my right to love as well as yours?—
And if I love, wherefore not mention it?
Sure 'tis the lot of man to love; therefore
Tis neither blame, nor laughable, that I
Should love all womankind, but chiefly one.

Yet, gentle reader of these sketches dull—
Now drawing rapidly towards a close—
You must perceive, that not from man alone
Nor woman either, have I all my joy,
My blessedness, received. I've been in love,
Even from my boyhood, with creation's scenes;
Thus I have often mentioned hill and dale,
Mountain and river, rivulet and rill—

Have sung of corn-fields, and of pasture-fields—
Have sung of meadows, cots, mansions, and domes—
Of glassy lakes, blue seas, and snowy clouds,—
Of spring and summer, autumn and winter.
Critic! you call me amiable, and praise
My heart—I much fear at my head's expense;
Yet blame me not; for, let me tell you, what
The heart feels deeply that the mouth must speak;
And thus too I have spoken,—be it so.
But think you, friendly reader, that my life
Has been none else than joy? Oh! do you think
That I have nothing met, save lovely fields,
And placid seas, and skies serene? Think you
That I, throughout my pilgrimage, have met
With nought but friends and hospitable homes?
Oh! I have had my hail blasts and my storms,
My walks dreary and sad; but 'tis not these—
At stormy seas or sleety boisterous clouds
I laugh in proud defiance!—no! 'tis man,
Mean, envious, slanderous, and with malice gorged—
Rapacious as the beast or bird of prey—
'Tis man that moves my soul to wrath and scorn!
Had he been heathen, Turk, or swarthy Jew
Who filched my purse from me, and stole my fame,
I could with equal soul have borne the sin;
But 'twas a Christian man; a holy man,
A man of many prayers—most evangelic,
A thorough Calvinist, out and out a saint,

And to the back bone most religious—
That cheated, slandered me, and strove to damn!

But I have done. Kind reader, fare thee well!
I have striven to keep my word—to mingle tears
And joy with you, as Britain's scenes I sung—
Britain! much like myself, at present sad,
Though brighter days wait both of us I hope.

END OF BOOK VII.

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